

POEMS



ROBERT
BURNS
THOMSON

THOMSON

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THE POEMS

OF

ROBERT BURNS THOMSON

WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES, GLOSSARY,
AND INDEX OF FIRST LINES.



*"All hail! ye English speaking races
O' ev'ry shape and shade o' faces,
Whate'er your fore-bears; what's the odds?
Ye speak the language o' the gods."*

*"Tho' when it's interspersed wi' Scotch
Frae common kail to guid hotch potch
It's graded up, and syne mair British
The language is, and no sae skittish."*



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INTRODUCTION

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MANY of the poems of Robert Burns Thomson, the author of this volume, contain words from the Scottish dialect. He had a preference for these words: he was born of Scottish parents; he lived the first half of his lifetime in Scotland; and in Canada where he afterwards resided he had Scottish friends who expected him to use words that appealed to them. Although he was advised by the late Mr. W. T. Stead, the well known journalist, to avoid scotticisms, he protested, and continued what he believed was a justifiable exercise of his birthright.

His poems were a natural response to his environment: he was sensitive to what was going on not only in his district and in the Empire, but in the world at large. Sometimes he was selected to act the part of Father Christmas, and had to write something to say at each celebration. His experience was that Western farmers were victimized so he had to write his view on their behalf. He had an affection for the Royal Family, and appreciated his great British heritage; he was much interested in the Boer war, and the Great War in which his friends engaged,—and he had to express himself on topics related to these subjects. Simple incidents of human interest appealed to him, and a kindness by a friend was an inspiration. His soldier friends received special attention, and his attitude to the Kaiser and war lords received pointed expression. The poems are a record of his response to environment near and far, during the period of his lifetime in which he wrote.]

On any subject that took his fancy the author wrote with ease, and his rhymes indicate that he had poetic imagination and facility of rhythmic expression. However, he never appeared to start out to become a poet, and he

wrote comparatively little, nothing until about ten years after he had begun farming in Canada, and thereafter at intervals only. He preferred to do things well, and if more leisure and less anxiety for the welfare of his family in the new land had been in his life, the chances are he would have written better and more than he did. He is not known to have written anything before the last twenty-seven years of his lifetime, and after he started writing his quitting for long intervals seemed to correspond with periods of anxiety. He was naturally light hearted and sought the sunshine, but the somewhat tragic break from happy life in Scotland to pioneer life on a homestead in Western Canada and the consequent struggle to bring up his large family bore heavily on him. When his outlook was hopeful and happy and his fancy stirred with a subject, he would take up his pen. Engaged in writing he was happy, and it was not easy for him to keep away from the humorous side of things. He had much pleasure in writing and delivering an article to an appreciative friend, a word of commendation being a complete satisfaction. Not that he did not know his writing was worth reading, for he appeared to believe that anything he had finished would actually please the person for whom it was intended. He did not seek a topic to write about, and a topic assigned was almost hopeless for him. He seldom wrote unless he had something of special interest or amusement for someone, and the character of the person whom he wished to please had much to do with his treatment of the subject.

The author seemed never to have any intention to have his poems published except that during his last year he amused himself preparing an index, and a few days before he died he added some words in his own handwriting at the end of his will, which implied a suggestion that his poems be published in book form at a convenient time.

Since nearly all the author's topics had an association with himself or belonged to his day, the date or year when each poem was written has been added as a reminder to the reader, and a few explanatory footnotes have been inserted in places by the editor.

It should be noted here that some words in the poems

ought to be given a Scottish pronunciation for rhythm although they have an ordinary spelling: for example,—“die” may have to be pronounced “dee”; “house,” “hoose”; “bread,” “breed”; “dead,” “deed”; “thumbs,” “thooms”; “down,” “doon”; “now,” “noo”; “how,” “hoo”; “crown,” “croon”; etc.

It may be well here to indicate that many words spelt like ordinary English, have to Scottish folk, a different pronunciation: for example,—“my” is pronounced “ma”; “to” is pronounced “tae”; “light,” “licht”; “night,” “nicht”; “down,” “doon”; etc.

Although the author has given humorously in his “A Simple Story” and elsewhere some information about himself, a few biographic remarks may be of interest to the reader.

Mr. Thomson was born in 1847 in Pollokshaws, Scotland. After leaving the public school he took a course in weaving in its various branches and acquired knowledge and skill in the textile industry. Subsequently he started, in partnership, and carried on successfully a business of supplying material and accessories to mills in that industry. Unfortunately in January 1880 he suffered serious injury in a railway accident, which kept him away from work for such a long while that when he recovered sufficiently he realized that both his position in business, and his health, had been much weakened. He became dissatisfied with the changed relative position in the partnership, that had been assigned to him as a result of his absence through illness, and consequently he decided to start business alone elsewhere. About that time he consulted agents of the Canadian Department of Immigration, who, overlooking his qualifications for occupation in the textile industry and his lack of qualifications necessary in farming, gave him such advice and glowing account of opportunities on the land in Western Canada that he, relying on the representations of the agents, resolved to emigrate to that part of the Empire, with the intention of becoming a farmer.

Accordingly in July 1884 the author with his wife and their seven small children arrived in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Within a few days all the children caught diphtheria and had to be taken to the hospital where Finlay, the fourth son, died.

At earliest opportunity after arrival in Winnipeg the author consulted an official of the Department of Dominion Lands, who on request undertook to select for him a homestead, but although he kept in touch with that official for more than a year, the selection of a homestead was never made. It may have been that the official believed the author was quite unfit physically and otherwise unqualified to enter upon the hardships of the life of a homesteader and in kindness sought delay, hoping that in time Mr. Thomson would find suitable permanent employment in the City.

Meanwhile since in those days there was a depression in business in Western Canada it was difficult for an immigrant to find employment, and the author having come to Canada to become a farmer, putting away his gloves and top hat, did whatever work he could get.

While in employment at the Exhibition in Winnipeg in the summer of 1885 the author had the pleasure of meeting the late Hon. John Norquay and members of his cabinet, who immediately taking an interest in him offered him a position in the Civil Service. However so thoroughly was he imbued with his resolution to become a farmer that he had to decline the offer.

Having received an invitation from the late Mr. James Campbell, then a teacher in the Town of Minnedosa, Manitoba, to occupy a farm about seven miles south of that town Mr. Thomson and his family in the autumn of 1885 moved from Winnipeg to the farm. There they received first impressions of rural life.

In the spring of 1887, the whole family, including Lily Gordon born in the previous autumn, moved from Mr. Campbell's farm, about a mile east to a homestead. It was of rolling surface covered with trees, scrub and ponds, a paradise for small game and mosquitoes. On such a homestead even an experienced Canadian farmer would have had difficulty in making a living. As for the author

who had no knowledge of farming except the little he had learned during the short while he had been on Mr. Campbell's farm, no equipment, little or no means, and a wife and seven children, to build a home and make a living on such land was well nigh a hopeless enterprise. However, there were several factors that kept him on the homestead. Once on the homestead it was impossible through lack of means to leave it. There was small game in abundance, plenty of wood for fuel, and hay and water for animals. Then there was a certain novelty in the new life in the realm of nature, and a hopeful outlook in those days, which combined to make light of hardship and to keep up an interest in life. The family had always plenty to read, and almost immediately the young sons took to hunting, which, though for the pot only, was good sport. A most faithful ally of the family was Bob, the dog, who became of the very best in locating and retrieving small game.

It is unnecessary to give details descriptive of the first buildings on the homestead or of how the farm was managed by the author. Suffice it to say that he muddled through, no doubt with plenty of comedy and some tragedy in the view of any experienced outsider. However, by the time the novelty had worn off the Thomsons were well able to provide for themselves the necessities of life.

With the author the farm was never an end in itself: his family always came first and the farm was merely to minister to their needs. If the children wished to hunt or play ball or read or prepare for examinations they did these things: Mr. Thomson appeared to give no orders nor administer any punishment. If he ever uttered impatient words to the children, it was very seldom, and it is certain that he was never known to have spoken an unkind word to his wife. And yet his influence was always there, patient, quiet, and gentle. In the same way that the sons took the responsibility of hunting to provide for the table, so they assumed voluntarily other duties in operation of the farm. He desired them to grow up self-reliant, strong in body and mind, and to be fit and free to select and follow their own occupation in life: although he himself may have

become more attached to farming, he wished his children to choose for themselves. He desired that they should appreciate their great British heritage: that they should prize their Imperial citizenship and realize that the existence of the Empire was conditional on justice and freedom to the people in every part of it. He hoped that they would be above sectionalism, and that they would adopt and apply in their citizenship in Canada an Imperial outlook,—justice, freedom, and the whole Empire for every part of it.

After he had become somewhat settled on the homestead, Mr. Thomson took part in the social, religious, and political activities of the district, including Provincial and Dominion elections. He could sing and dance quite well, and took pleasure in attending the concerts and some of the dances. He and other parents of the vicinity in the year 1886 organized Rookhurst School District, and later they started and carried on a Sunday school and library in the schoolhouse. Church service was conducted in the same building by various denominations respectively: as one denomination dropped out another would take its place. The preacher was sometimes a layman or a student for the ministry. Although the author was a Presbyterian while in Scotland, he, while on the homestead, attended church service regularly and listened patiently, respectfully, to the preacher regardless of the denomination in charge. After his attending such services he realized more clearly that Christianity was the important thing, not the denomination, and that an excellent place in which to worship was the vast church with the sky roof, in which the sermons came direct from the Creator.

In connection with the Sunday school were the two chief events of the year in the Rookhurst district,—the picnic in July and the Christmas Tree in December. On several occasions Mr. Thomson was selected to act Father Christmas at the Tree, and what he had to say on each occasion he prepared in rhyme. His rhythmic remarks were well taken by the audience, and thereafter when any subject appealed to him he did not hesitate to write to amuse his friends.

In political life in Rookhurst Mr. Thomson took part:

he was trustee and secretary-treasurer of the school district, and secretary-treasurer of the local branch of United Grain Growers; and in the Provincial and Dominion elections he acted in an official capacity.

While residing in Scotland the author was a follower of Gladstone, and approved of his home rule policy for Ireland. However, he believed that the emotional, credulous Irish were too often the victims of unwise leadership; and that on their obtaining a local Parliament to manage Dominion affairs they should seek to make more use of their Imperial heritage for protection, trade, and other benefits: the somewhat amusing firebrands were far too ready to expect the Irish in exchange for a mere toy to throw away their Empire. On the other hand he suggested that the Scottish were happy in their conception that Britain and the other parts of the Empire were merely enlargements of Scotland, being managed by the Scottish for the benefit of themselves, and others.

The author was pleased with his citizenship in municipality, Province, and Dominion (with reservation), but he prized most of all his Imperial citizenship, and he hoped that it would develop more in reality. In his view the Empire composed of the Dominions was to the world an excellent object lesson in collective action against international crime. He thought the Empire should co-operate with other nations to preserve peace by opposing and punishing such crime, and to enable the Empire to share equitably in that duty it should have adequate armaments on land and in air and water. He was hopeful that in the near future the Dominions would realize the duty, the necessity, to provide proportionate parts of such armaments. He believed that nations should base their acts on Christian principles, international law, and that good-will and peace should prevail among them, but such nations ought to be strong enough to repel criminal attack, and collectively well able to compel observance of international law.

Knowing that neither Canada nor any other part of the Empire expected the invasion of Belgium or France, by the Central States of Europe, and knowing that the conduct of

those States in that invasion was nothing short of premeditated robbery and murder, the author was shocked to find that the heads of the churches in those States did not appear to denounce to them and the world the criminal acts.

He had no quarrel with the individual German citizen: he thought the German people were courageous, intelligent, and generous, but they had been misled and coerced in the mass to engage in a war of aggression, by the Kaiser and his war lords, who were the personification of militarism with its vulgar pomp and brutal crime. The Germans and their allies, misled in mass to crucify Christendom, he appeared to name Huns.

Here may be noted what the author meant by militarism, and how he thought it should be met. To him militarism meant a nation deliberately controlled and armed for the purpose of committing breaches of international law, including robbery and murder in the land of another nation. In condemning militarism he did not mean that the citizens of the British Empire should disarm and throw up their hands to militarism: he would oppose militarism by good citizenship in the Empire and good nationhood in the world. Our citizens were not only to be able, ready, and willing, with the necessary armaments, to defend the Empire against militarism, but to require that the Empire co-operate with other nations to prevent militarism and require observance of international law: in the nation the citizenship, and in the world the nationhood, had to be strong not weak or blind or degenerate, if international law was to be enforced and peace preserved.

In the federal politics of the Dominion the author experienced disappointment: no matter how the people of Western Canada organized and voted, they always failed to obtain satisfactory reforms as to tariffs and markets. By reason of the tariffs the people of the West had to pay comparatively exorbitant prices for what they bought, and for many years the farmers had to accept for their produce whatever price suited the local buyer. The tariffs and lack of efficient marketing facilities hindered progress and induced poverty, while manufacturers and their associates,

in Eastern Canada, and middlemen, became wealthy. The farmers of the West, including the author, from bitter experience, were well aware of those things that affected them so adversely, but they were powerless to reach needed legislation: by reason of the small representation of Western Canada in the Dominion Parliament and Cabinet the people of Eastern Canada through their overwhelming majority in such representation in effect governed Western Canada. The editor suggests that if Western Canada had been treated with more consideration and wisdom in the discussion leading to Confederation such weakness in the Canadian constitution might have been avoided, and the author and other Western farmers would not have suffered such continual disappointment in their political efforts to reach reasonable prices in purchases and sales. It is clearly not in accordance with the foundation on which the Empire rests that affairs vital to the large population of the vast isolated Western Canada should be so absolutely at the mercy of people outside its limits, living under different conditions a thousand miles away on the other side of no man's land. Such absence of justice and freedom in the political life of Western Canada cannot be justified and is out of harmony with Imperial citizenship in the British Empire.

Although the author at all times looked to the leading British statesmen and the leading Canadian statesmen, of the two great older political parties, with confidence in Imperial affairs, and to the latter with hope in local affairs, yet he had great sympathy with the Labour movement for the amelioration of the condition of the poor. He had no admiration for the wealthy philanthropist, so-called, who gave to charity but underpaid his workmen. However, he was shocked at the general strike of 1919 in Winnipeg. All business was paralyzed: street cars, postal and civic services, and delivery of food, were all stopped, causing great hardship to the citizens. He thought that strike was entirely out of place in a land then of plenty and opportunity, and he blamed bitterly the strike leaders. He had a strong impression from the general strike that such disturbance was a blind and cruel method of reform in em-

ployment and legislation, causing too much loss and suffering to the workers themselves and others: poverty was to be lessened rather by education, legislation, taxation of wealth, organization, and, best of all, making freely available the vast areas of arable vacant land for people physically and mentally fit to go farming.

In the author's day land became so dear that many of the farmers were selling their farms at such high price on deferred instalments, that payment could never be made, with the final result that both vendors and purchasers were off the farms; and other lands were held by governments, corporations, and individuals, at high prices, arresting progress. To him the land policy of the West appeared bad: speculation and high prices kept people off the land,—a national calamity; and consequently he thought that vacant land not in use should on reasonable notice revert to the Crown to be allotted to people in need of it for actual use. He believed the hope for Western Canada was in freedom of trade, free land, free, or cheap, fuel, a statutory selling agency, statutory low rate of interest, and municipal improvements on cash basis only: an approximation to these factors would avoid strikes in urban places, and build the best foundation for prosperity in all branches of industry.

"From peasant to lord," as a motto for would-be farmer, was approved by the author, his view being:—

The motto has nothing to do with social status, but rather expresses method and hope,—for both the individual and the West. The beginner at farming should aim to produce all his food on his land, and make at home from raw wool, hides and skins as much of his clothing and household effects as he can. If he cannot spin, knit, sew and tan, he should learn to do these things and do them, and keep away from debt. If possible he should exchange work with neighbours until he will have money to buy equipment. Such "peasant" must be young, strong, intelligent, well able to consult books in connection with his affairs, patient, and interested in nature and his work: he must be not only a farmer in plants and animals but a manufacturer of all things needed in his own home, including, among

others, soap, candles, clothing, bedding, rugs and edibles. He must keep busy the whole year. If he has not the money he does not buy, and he is too resourceful and independent to go into debt. Such a course makes him strong physically, mentally, morally and spiritually. When he has plenty of money with which to purchase at any time anything he needs and can afford to do some travelling, the farmer should be the happiest man in the world, a very "lord," with his home among the beauties of nature, away from the noise, smoke and dust of the city, such a home as the wealthy people of the city are glad and proud to occupy as long each year as they can. Such farmers are building the best foundation for prosperity in all other industries. However, progress in the construction of that foundation in Western Canada cannot proceed satisfactorily until the people acquire freedom of trade (control of tariffs) and control of marketing facilities, nor until they get rid of the holder of, and the speculator in, vacant lands.

With much regret Mr. Thomson in the autumn of 1908 left his old friends in Rookhurst and returned to the City of Winnipeg where he resided with his wife, youngest daughter, and three of his sons, during the remainder of his lifetime. In Winnipeg he had a comfortable home, he occupied himself doing chores about the house, had pleasant hours with friends, did some rhyming to amuse them, and enjoyed life.

Although he was brought up in a city, Glasgow, Scotland, and resided in Winnipeg for more than a year in 1884-5, he did not take kindly to some of the ways of the city on his return to it. No doubt during the twenty-three years in which he lived on the farm change took place both in himself and in the city. His home in Rookhurst was surrounded by nature: above him the universe moved in beauty and silence, and around him among the wild birds and beasts and plants was perfection in beautiful form, musical sound, and graceful movement: no noise,—either music or silence. How different on his return he found the city! Pandemonium! Those terrible vehicles on the streets! Even among some of the people there was unnecessary noise

with foot and voice, and the rural ideal was conspicuous by her absence:—

*“Like the dew on the gowan lying
Is the fa’ o’ her fairy feet,
And like winds in simmer sighing
Her voice is low and sweet.”*

If noise were a luxury it would be far too expensive, but since it was a curse, why was it permitted? It was a blight on the value of property, it had a bad influence on young people, and was detrimental to the health of the citizens especially the older people. The modern city without the noise might be civilization, but with it,—pandemonium!

Mr. Thomson suggested that some of the children in the city were victimized: they were blessed by nature like other children, but too many of them were influenced by unnatural fashion as to treatment of foot and face, and by the noisy environment,—tending to affect injuriously movement, appearance, and voice. He suggested that the City Council with by-laws, and the school teachers with suitable curriculum could do much for the children to counteract the disadvantages of life in the city.

The wife of the author was all he said about her in his verses. She was quiet, industrious, religious, unselfish, a great reader, and the best of mothers. She was a Munro, with Highland courage and a somewhat fiery nature, but patient, gentle and blessed with a priceless contentment in her home. Her aim in life was the welfare of her children, and although she lived until eighty-five years of age she always thought that they could not get along without her. She died in March 1929, having survived her husband by seven years, and was buried beside him and their oldest son, Robert, in Old Kildonan Cemetery near Winnipeg.

A description of the author personally is revealed in his writing. No doubt he was much like other Scotsmen, with, as each of them, his own individuality. He admitted that he did not “drink, smoke, swear, nor go with the lasses,” which, in some respects, was unorthodox but pardonable.

He admired beauty in any form, especially among the ladies, and he was often heard gently to say "no woman is ugly." In appearance he was handsome, tall, slender, with long soft beard, gentle voice, and graceful movement. Although he read widely and may have thought much, he did not appear to be a student. He seemed to have naturally a clear view: his vision and remarks at times were quite prophetic. He did not seem to bore into any subject: his mind was not of the woodpecker sort but rather like his Scottish lark, which, in an exalted position, fluttering, views the world, sings to its heart's content, then drops to earth. He was never "on the make," he never made a dollar that he would call his own, and in such matter never thought of himself personally. Neither in spirit nor in body did he appear to grow old: to the last he enjoyed watching athletic games, attending concerts and theatres, and joining the fun of the younger people; and up to the time of his decease his appearance for his years was fresh and young. His chief characteristics were independence, courage, and gentleness. In brief he was a very fine mixture of human and divine, and he wrote his poems expecting them to be read and appreciated by those for whom they were written, much as our robin on arrival in spring sings to friends, and the world.

J.L.M.T.

Winnipeg, 7th December, 1935.

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THE CHRISTMAS TREE

*Written to be read at our annual Christmas Tree held at the
home of Mr. Elias Jones, December 1895.*

THE Christmas trees, like Christian men,
Were not just always Christian;
For dip we deep in history,
Or wake from sleep mythology,
And we shall find our Christmas tree
Was used in ancient mimicry:
For trees were trees ere men were made,
And formed each nook and shelt'ring glade
Where oft poor Eve and Adam strayed.

In Eden then or I'm mista'en
Where bairnies first began to reign,—
Or was it as the parson preaches,
That apple trees led first to breeches,
Then weans, then playthings—plums or peaches
And other gear—
And then the tree whose pow'r far reaches
Like what we've here?

What's bonnier than the berry bush,
Whose fruit betimes wi' gentle push,
Peeps 'neath the green leaves' shelt'ring crush,
And caught! assumes the crimson blush
Like maiden sweet
When youth delighted radiant rush,
Such joys to greet?

What's bonnier then? again I ask,
Ere drawing to a close my task.
Just think o' a' the lovely trees
That gently play wi' ev'ry breeze,
And name your choice.
(Mr. ———, aloud) The Christmas tree!

Hurrah, then, for our Christmas tree,
 Whose fruit is made for you and me;
 Whose light shines o'er the whole wide world
 Where'er the Christian flag's unfurled.
 Though wee folk think that it's just to please us,
 It means "The light of the world is Jesus."
 "Let us rejoice."



OUR HOST, ELIAS JONES

*Written at same time and for same occasion as
 "The Christmas Tree."*

YOUR Rookhurst Bard's (!!) nae flatterer
 Of neighbour or of friend,
 Nor yet is he a chatterer
 O' talk that might offend;
 But there are times exceptional,
 I mean such times as these,
 When hearts are most receptional,
 Made so by Christmas trees.

So let us now advantage take
 To give a man his due,
 And recognize for friendship's sake
 A friend right through and through.
 To drink a toast we don't intend,
 But just in joyous tones,
 Let each one name with me our friend,
 And host, Elias Jones!
 (All together please) Elias Jones, Elias Jones,
 our host, Elias Jones!

A man's a man "tho' e'er sae puir"
 We a' believe in that,
 Yet wish we a' our friens had mair
 To mak them bien and fat.

Wha mair deserves prosperity
Than he wha this place owns?
Then let us shout wi' three times three
Our host, Elias Jones!
(All together please) Elias Jones, Elias Jones,
our host, Elias Jones!

Looking back from this year, 1935, Elias Jones took up a home-
stead in Rookhurst School District, South of Minnedosa, about fifty
years ago. Mr. Jones is a Welshman, he is a first class farmer, and
has always taken a helpful part in the affairs of the community.

*From R. B. Thomson,
6.14.17 W.,
Minnedosa P.O.,
Man., Canada.*

18th Dec., 1895.

Dear Jameses three, from R. B. T.
Accept a few short lines
That won't be complimentary
For they impose some fines.
Don't think it disrespectful:
Take punishment like men,
For being so neglectful
With paper, ink and pen.

On New-Year's Eve, (now I believe
You'll all ob'dient be,
And won't deceive or further grieve
A good old chum like me),
Don't think it disrespectful:
Take punishment like men,
For being so neglectful
With paper, ink and pen.

All arm in arm, (I mean no harm
 But yet I'll have my sport
 In false alarm, on mine ain farm),
 You may need such support!
 Don't think it disrespectful:
 Take punishment like men,
 For being so neglectful
 With paper, ink and pen.

Make straight (?) for "Mary quite contrair—
 i.e." (*Pinkerton's I mean)
 And feast your eyes on tarts and pies
 And all things to be seen.
 Don't think it disrespectful:
 Take punishment like men,
 For being so neglectful
 With paper, ink and pen.

Then when you've gazed, and duly praised
 Such things as there you see,
 Just turn your backs, retrace your tracks,
 Such things are not for thee!!!
 Don't think it disrespectful:
 Take punishment like men,
 For being so neglectful
 With paper, ink and pen.

*To my three old chums, James Cadenhead, James Brown,
 and James Gilchrist, these lines are respectfully inscribed!!!*
R. B. Thomson.

*Mr. Jas. Cadenhead,
 115 Main St., Bridgeton,
 Glasgow, Scotland.*

* Mary Pinkerton's was a favourite resort of ours when young men.
 Mary had better pies and pastry than any other abstainers' resort in
 Glasgow.

A TRIBUTE OF RESPECT

GIVE ear, Oh Tribune, to a voice
From Rookhurst's wailing wild,
And circulate in language choice
Regrets from man and child.
For we are wae for neighbours gone,
And wae for ithers going
To ither pairts, though not unknown,
To joys or griefs unknowing.

We've lost, within the last decade,
As good men as the world ere saw:
Although their gifts were ne'er displayed
For show, they're missed since they're awa.
But now, alas, what's waur to bide,
The brothers Roberts mean to go,
And Rookhurst folk are near beside
Themselves, wi' genuine grief and woe.

We'll no deny George has his fault,
(We're maybe a' mair sinful):
"His savor hasna lost its salt,"—
O' virtue he is brimful.
For George is aye the gentleman,
Deny it at your peril,
A gentleman "heid heart an' haun"
As much as ony Earl.

And Roberts is a weel kenn'd name,
As soldier, clerk and sailor:
The Roberts folk are known to fame,
Nae mere men made by tailor.
And George and Randal's been wi' us
For twelve long years and over,
And though they never made a fuss,
They've no lived aye in clover.

And now, Oh Tribune, think and speak:
 Should men like these when leavin',
 Be left like ony whiff o' reek
 To run as if for thievin'?
 By Heav'ns! if you should let them gang
 Without a deoch-an-doris,
 Your Cannon aff its wheels I'll bang,
 Tho' the cooler hears the chorus.

28th Jan. 1896 Sent to The Editor (Mr Cannon) Minnedosa Tribune.

The brothers Roberts, Imperial pensioners, were among the first to settle in the district south of Minnedosa. George had been a purser in the Navy, and Randal a civil engineer in India. On about the date of the tribute they moved to a new district near Lake Dauphin.

A CATASTROPHE

WHAT can I do? How can I tell
 The mishap that last night befell?
 I feel as if my heart would break,
 For some one's spoiled my Jumpin' Jake.

I got my Jumpin' Jake ye see,
 Frae aff a famous Christmas tree,
 And vow'd that I'd much pleasure take
 In playin' wi' my Jumpin' Jake.

And ev'ry time that I was dool,
 I'd sit me on our cutty stool,
 An' soon he'd twirl like ony snake,
 So nimble was my Jumpin' Jake.

I think he understood the fun,
 For whiles he scarcely had begun,
 When wi' his een the house he'd rake
 For praise, would that vain Jumpin' Jake.

And having judged from smiling faces,
That we all wished to see his paces,
He'd climb and tumble, tak the cake,
Frae ev'ry other Jumpin' Jake.

But now I ken na what to dae,
Since my ae pleasure's gone astray:
I feel as if my heart would break,
For some one's spoiled my Jumpin' Jake.

Eureka! Wife, upon my word,
I think my plaint has been absurd.
Hand me that spool: I'll aiblins make
A new slide for my Jumpin' Jake.

4th February, 1896.



**BIRTHDAY PARTY AT R. GRAHAM'S,
LORNDAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

*To R. Graham, Esq.,
4.14.17 W.*

7th February, 1896.

DEAR Friend, your kind request has come
—Accept congratulations—
To "sound the trump and beat the drum"
And then attack some rations,
Upon your fiftieth [?] natal day,—
How nice such friendship to display!
You'll have among your friends, D.V.,
Both Miss Munro and

R.B.T.

A natal day! A Graham presides
At his own festive table spread:
Walt Christmas at the table head;
True Adams-sons fill up the sides.

The joyous host and humble friends
Surrender, by good wives hard prest,
And taking seats before the best,
Right joyously they make amends

By praising loud the birthday cake,
The various viands sweetly made,
While side-long glances sure displayed
That wives like men can flatt'ry take.

Anon like any country dance,
The ladies change place wi' the men:
"Sweets to the sweet" now rules again,
Looking like something new frae France.

And now the birthday feast is o'er,
Slip we into our host's sanctum,
And "blow our trumpets, beat the drum,"
As we had never done before.

We settled questions two or three
That common folk wad fear to try,
But honesty dictates that I
Vouch we'd nae "wee drap in our e'e."

For lang before the moon got up,
We hitched our teams and made for hame,
Wishing long life to Robert Graham,
Syne aff we gaed to crack o' whup.

10th February, 1896.

Robert Graham was a good scholar, and noted for his knowledge of Burns and Shakespeare. He was father of Miss Mary Graham, the nurse, hereinafter mentioned. Miss Munro was Mr. Thomson's sister-in-law.

THOSE TEARS

THOSE tears! Ah, who could stand those tears?
The great strong lad whose ruddy cheek
Glowed red with health, whose limbs bespeak
Th' athlete, assuaging parents' fears
That sprang from love when as a child
The boy shewed weakness, tho' so wild!

But of those tears? They're in his pants;
His pants in nimble hands, his aunt's,
Will soon be mended, so, and then,
Those tears will soon be there again.

7th February, 1896.

The boy was Mr. Thomson's fifth son, James Glencairn.



**TO THE EDITOR (MR. CANNON),
MINNEDOSA TRIBUNE**

DEAR Editor, fill up your gun
Wi' best blank cartridges for fun,
Nor take amiss some erstwhile raillery,
Frae ane wha uses sma' artillery.

Kind folk proclaim, tho' I scarce heed,
(Just like the cry "The king is deid
Long live the king") "Why Robin's lievin':
We thoct him deid"—your servant deavin'!

Tho' I am kin to king o' writers,
(I'm mair the now like king o' debtors)
Too humble I to join the fighters
For worldly fame among my betters.

Forbye, tho' filled wi' poets' notions,
I've aye been tauld to tak sic potions
That in the mind wad work abortion,
Tho' aye I had my ain diversion.

But now tho' well-nigh in my dotage
(Housed in a Manitoba cottage
O' humblest build to staun the blast)
Like an auld goose—
I mean a swan—I'll sing my last
But I'll sing crouse.

For I see a' my neighbours starvin'
Their minds, tho' maistly mair deservin',
And think that I'll supply the bread
To mak them think and scratch their head.

For you! Why turn't to your behoof?
But don't forget that I'm nae coof,
And while ye pree the printer's bite
Reserve for me the copyright!

Sae to your stick and advertise
Ye'll tell the readers o't nae lies:
Ye needna do't to my dictation
But do't to raise your circulation!
Robin.

P.S.—Enclosed ye hae some scraps,
But yet I think them only draps
Fa'en frae the bucket.
Gin I rin dry? Wi' tott'rin' staps
Fa' to an' *kick it.
Robin.

17th February, 1896.

*"Kick it,"—kick the bucket, i.e. die

**ADDRESS TO THE REEVE AND COUNCIL OF
THE MUNICIPALITY OF ODANAH,
AND OTHERS**

I

Ho! gentlemen (if that you be,
And I've no wish to doubt it:
Your wives and families I dree,
Should ken much more about it?)
But gentlemen again I say,
Give me but your attention pray,
While heart-sense makes my pencil stray
Sae pointedly though taper,
That maybe you your hand will stay,
*And cancel yon bit paper.

II

If Manitoba's great foundation
Is by the farmers to be built
Why should the founders o' a nation
Have their material stol'n and spilt?
Why should our brick and lime and stone
Be sold t'enrich mere hangers on?

III

Were hangers on but men o' straw,
They might come handy to make bricks wi'
But when they're lawyers backed by law,
You've to be smart to match their tricks aye.
But think ye are ye men o' sense
To hansom them at our expense?

IV

We'll say there's near two hundred sections
In this ae quarter o' the state,
Where workers early made selections
While ither builders started late.
In talking o' this pick o' homesteads
The choice o' some was very funny,
For instance mine, like ither blockheads',
Was fitted more for wolf and bunny,

Who in his homestead got "a snap."
But who can guide the turns o' fate?
Or what's the use o' these reflections?
Comparing wi' the other chap
Some may have houses roofed wi' slate
While others hae but slim erections,
And some there are still diggin' yet
Among the shiftin' sand an' rubble,
An' scarce a resting place can get
For plumb or square ere down they tum'le.
Some lose their judgment, some their lives,
Some lose their children, some their wives,
Some mair successful are than ithers,
Some scorn their unsuccessful brithers,
While some, for which the Lord be praised,
Hae aye a helpin' haun weel raised,
Like "Pete" and "Dave," twa guid Scotch sinners,
Wha'd want themsels and gie their dinners.
Some fairly beat have gane awa
And left their farms like Panama
Where chaos reigns, an' weeds are waur
Than ever they had been before!
And a', or nearly a', because
Friens had been scarcer far than foes,
And foes that now our laws enthrone,
I mean the lawyer hangers on,
Wha 'stead o' wrestlin' wi' the pleugh
Wrest cash frae simpletons like you.

V

Of hangers on we've mony classes,
But a' the rest are senseless asses
Compared wi' ane your ardour fires,
I mean the man our Reeve admires,
Who voting first to help the struggler,
Then turns around like ony juggler,
Advising you, and a' for cater,
To thrust your brithers under water.
For shame! to help, and then to hinder!
To bind a wound, then tear't asunder.

VI

If you've no further help, hae patience,—
Make known your name amang the nations
For greatest virtue, then trust in God.
We'll do the same, and turn the sod,
And sow the seed; blunt mair pleugh airns,
And show we're a' John Tamson's bairns,
By paying our notes as soon's we can.
Nor should you squeeze more frae a man.

WARNING!

Now don't a' rush north for a fellow,
To seize his gear or mak him bellow,
Or he will gie sic eldritch screeches
Will send your hearts into your breeches!
Robin IV.!

15th February, 1896.

* The above was also mailed on 20th February, 1896, to the Editor of Minnedosa Tribune. The Municipality without assistance from the Province had supplied seed grain to a number of the farmers, and was pressing for payment through suit and otherwise.



AN EPISODE

I

Boys, mind ye how when far frae hame,
A Scotch commander, Colonel Graham,
Hailing frae Glesca, men an' a',
Brought up his "Keelies" in a raw,
And pointing to Arabi's men,
Altho' he kent death was their fate,
Cried "Begnets on your rifle en'
An' charge them up the Gallowgate!"

II

The weel kenn'd words gang to the heart,
The cauld steel's to the musket welded,
The yell, the thrill, the angry dart,
The crash, the enemy has melted.

III

Oh Mithers' hearts why are ye throbbin',
Oh Sweethearts' tears why do you flow,
Oh Sisters dear why are ye sobbin',
While Brothers' cheeks are all aglow?

IV

Oh comrades brave why a' sae mute?
O'er comrades' grave what dims the e'e?
Why don't you march wi' foot to foot?
Why hang your arms sae sluggishly?

V

Conflicting questions conflict brings,
The answers rough rub aff the stings,
The bugle sounds, the sergeant's voice
Brings to "attention" a' the boys.

VI

The "Kurnel" maks a short remark,
Then "shoulder arms" the band strikes up,
The "pow'rs that be" again embark,
While sly anes pree the stirrup cup.

18th February, 1896.

THE MUNRO DOCTRINE

I

ALL hail! my cousins ower the border,
Let me just ca' ye a' to order,
For surely you deserve the prisons,
For threat'ning sae your ain hale cousins.

II

I'm sure McTurk o' Ven'zuela,
Doesn't mean to burke, the honest fellah,
But simply he will do his duty,
Ye ken, "for England, home and beauty."

III

Nae doubt your Doc. Munro's prescription
Is counted yet the right description;
While Doc. McTurk's mair modern physie
Is meant to gie some folk the toothache.

IV

Syne what a breeze thae Gaels hae made o't,
I'm sure ye ken the short and braid o't
Is only this that Docs. won't differ
About the daftness o't "whatiffer."

V

Forbye dear coz ye know quite well
I married a Munro mysel',
An' ken that Munro doctrines a'
Can melt before my breath like snaw.

VI

All Munro doctrines hae twa sides:
Ane for their clan what e'er betides;
Their clan a' Britishers include,
Sae there! tak back your language rude.

11th March, 1896.

EXTRAVAGANZA**I**

LET's speak of Manitoba, boys,
As it should be, as it shall be,
Full of good cheer and earthly joys,
As it should be, as it shall be,
When it's no just a tug-o'-war
Between the driven and the draw'r;
When ev'ry man wi' a' his might
Shall to his neighbour do the right;
When farmers stand aye arm in arm,
Protecting each from outward harm.

II

What's Manitoba's industries?
Why farming and its enemies:
But chang'd about as we shall see,
Why, friends and farming it shall be,
When "homestead" means a home, and such
That while it is so, none dare touch;
When homesteads never are assessed
Till they return what men invest;
When all must farm, and none hang on,
What farmers raise to prey upon;
When there's no harpy in the land
To prey on us on ev'ry hand;
When farmers are the drivers aye,
In first of arts the country's stay;
When drawers are all other men,
If only they their places ken;
When rulers do what farmers say
And Manitoba gains the day;
When Manitoba's nation'l bank,
Wi' bank of England takes its rank;
When men are never forc'd to flee
Because they need the brown baw-bee;
When frost or hail, or other cause,
Is met by more paternal laws;

When one inspector we require
In ev'ry town in the Empire;
When buy'rs as in the past have been,
Are never heard of, never seen;
When grain to nation'l barns is sent,
And sold by voice of Parliament;
When Parliament gives counsel free,
And works some way for salary;
When agents of our government
Are hanged for robbing immigrant;
When immigrant is safely led
From landing till he earns his bread,
Like things you safely keep from harm
At your experimental farm.

March 1896.

Mr. Thomson being a "green" immigrant in 1884 soon felt keenly that the Department of Immigration should have done something to guide immigrants. Soon also he formed the opinion that from lack of efficient organization the farmers were not receiving the returns to which they were entitled.



***EXTRA EXTRAVAGANZA**

I

SINCE eighteen-ninety-nine, my boys,
What glorious times we've had:
Good cheer and all the earthly joys
Have made our people glad.
How diff'rent from the foolish days
Of eighteen-ninety-six
When num'rous big monopolies
Had farmers in a fix.

II

How grand it is that we can plow
Until the ground is "froze":
We once were forc'd to stop, but now
Our work right onward goes.
From seeding time till hauling time
There's nothing dare obstruct,
And we don't think it any crime
Our business to conduct.

III

We don't now bother 'bout the price,
But haul at once to town:
No buyers now so swell and nice,
To prig the prices down;
But our inspector gives receipt
For grade, whate'er that be,
And weight of course, to make complete
In all simplicity.

IV

Then all we've got to do is wait
Till offers have come in
From some great European state
That wants the best of grain.
Best price now paid, hand o'er the keys:
The buy'rs have then control.
We'll bless the boat, pray for the breeze,
But they must pay the toll.

V

For if they want our grain abroad,
And they're whiles short that's clear,
Depend upon't they'll make a road,
Tho' it should cost them dear;
And whether Hudson's Bay or no,
It matters not to us:
They've plenty cash, they've plenty go,
We needn't make a fuss.

CHORUS

Man-i-to-ba, let's give a shout for thee,
Hip, hip, hurrah! Hip, hip hurrah!
Now give her three times three:
One, two, three—Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

March 1896.

• TUNE: "Oh Susannah don't you cry for me."

LETTER TO PEARSON'S WEEKLY

*Minnedosa P.O.,
Manitoba, Canada,
March 1896 .*

DEAR Editor o' Pearson's Weekly,
Ye hae a fact, I tell it meekly,
Writ by a great-grand-son o' Burns,
Auld Scotland's Bard,
Wha, worm-like, writhing, wrigglin' turns
At facts sae hard.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT BURNS THOMSON.

Enclosing:—

I

Here goes to win that five pound five?
As guid as done as I'm alive?
You'll just as weel sen't to a sinner
Wha's sure to come an easy winner?
For "facts are chieels that winna ding,"
But this chiel's fact will just tak wing,
And come in slick, neck an' header,
Wi' on his back a puir home-steadar.

II

Homesteads are frauds, an' that's my fact,
 Though just to prove't may need some tact:
 I mean of course our Manitoba's,
 Where even yet we're makin' snowba's.
 And maybe here ye get a blink
 O' something queer to mak ye think
 That Manitoba's pamphlets blether
 When talkin' o' their famous weather.

III

An immigrant frae Britain's shores
 Lands here in ignorance o' chores,
 And learns too late the many ruses
 That seal his fate: it sae confuses.
 For, 'stead o' being wisely led,
 He's left alone and simply bled
 By Manitoba's octopusses,
 Who, heartless things, ne'er mind his "cusses."

**IMMIGRATION**

GIN I were asked to gie advice
 About schemes immigrative,
 I'd gie some folk a guid surprise,
 They might ca' educative.

I'd tell them they'd been scoundrels a',
 Their countrymen misleading:
 I'd gang the length their crowns to claw,
 For that's just what they're needing.

For in the past we've just been fish'd
 Wi' pamphlet lying bait, Sir,
 And being caught, and even dish'd,
 They've left us to our fate, Sir.

I'll tell them, no by jing I won't:
I'll clear them out the nation,
And then I'll gang straught to the front,
And proffer for the station.

Then gie the truth about the land,
Ev'n our adopted country:
What things are bad, what things are grand,
For poor men or for gentry.

I'd up and say the land is here,
Just as the Lord has made it,
Wi' weeds an' vermin aye to spare,
Whether ye pleugh or spade it.

An' as for climate we'd enough
To bang the world a' over:
To stan' the heat they maun be tough,
The cauld, they maun be tougher.

About the frost an' hail an' worse,
I'd never think o' hidin':
The lie has ever brought the curse,
And no The Hand abidin':

For what commander ever failed
To heed the faintest omen,
That wasna ambushcade assailed,
And beaten by the foemen?

As to their prospect o' success,
That on us here depended,
For hangers on would mak a mess,
Unless we them defended.

For enemies in human shape,
I'd hae a cure most certain:
I'd mak for them a hempen rape,
And hang without a curtain.

At ony rate I'd try the plan,
And gie nae legal footing
To such as seem to help a man,
Yet end by him uprooting.

Producers a' hae my respect:
They're foremost o' the race, Sir.
The money jugglers I'd neglect
By giving them nae place, Sir.

When honourable trade is meant,
Then credit is just feeding,
Or at the worst a tool is lent,
With no attempt at bleeding.

But in the past we've just been fish'd
Wi' implemental bait, Sir,
And being caught and even dish'd,
They've left us to our fate, Sir.

You see, I'd clear the atmosphere,
Leave nothing to discover,
Then ower the seas my bark I'd steer,
Like ony honest lover.

Yet stop! Ye'll maybe think I'm queer:
Put ship at my disposal,—
I'll tak advantage o' leap year,
And send Miss C's proposal.

We'll send her character as well,
As I hae faintly trac'd it:
About her tocher we can tell,
For surely we hae pac'd it.

I'd ask the size o' each man's house,
Mak ane the same dimension,
So they should tumble in fu' crouse,
To stay being their intention.

Their household goods they maun bring ower.
I'd pay the hale expenses,
For ev'ry settler rues the hour,
He sold when out his senses.

I'd guard an' guide them to their hame,
A hame! to some what music!
They'd gladly bless the day they came,
Nor for auld hames be too sick.

But more, ere they get our consent,
Fix guardians for each lover;
Each member o' our Parliament
Shall surely them watch over,—

To help them through their honeymoon,
I mean their homestead duties,
And watch them till they settle down,
Full fledged successful beauties.

Then, not till then we'll ask their help,
I mean we'll ask for taxes:
By then she'll hae some weans to skelp,
While he'll can sharp his axes.

March 1896.

MITHER'S AWA

"Is my Mither awa?" a wee laddie had asked
At an angel o' mercy wha's patience he tasked.
The answer as sweet as an answer could fa'
Cam frae lips that ne'er lied "aye your Mither's awa."

"A weel," said the wean, as at Mary he keeks,
"The morn's my birthday and she promised me breeks
"But now that she's dead, it's the warst I e'er saw
"For I'll no get nae breeks now my Mither's awa."

But a heart that was sair at the laddie's great loss,
 Did a deed that was worthy Victoria's Cross,
 For prompt cam the promise while tears wat her cheeks,
 "Be comforted laddie, I'll mak your first breeks."

And true to her word that wee callan can stride
 Wi' han's deep in pouches and heart fu' o' pride,
 For Mary's swift fingers ne'er stoppit the steeks
 Till she made that we bairnie his first pair o' breeks.

Oh it's hard at the best when dear Mithers are taen
 Frae children a' big an' wi' weans o' their ain,
 But waes me for the bairns when a dear Mither seeks
 Her last hame in the heav'ns ere she maks their first breeks

May this wee laddie learn as he trudges along,
 That the best worldly wisdom is aye to be thrang
 Wi' sic deed o' great kindness as this act bespeaks:
 May he never forget his ain first pair o' breeks.

16th May, 1896.

"Mary" was Miss Mary Graham, the nurse; the "Mither" was Mrs. Hugh Jamleson of Lornedale School District; and the "wee laddie" was her son Robert.

COSTS

QUESTION

HAVE law makers gone out their senses
 That they don't see that law expenses
 Are ruining the lawyers' betters
 As soon as they're entrapt as debtors?

Are there no patriotic M.P.s
 To grapple wi' our folks' Nemesis
 And settle justly for all time, Sir,
 What I maintain is now a crime, Sir?

Now see what one man here proposes,
And don't pretend your diagnosis
Would prove him mad: he'll stand your doses
Of chaff, gin ye dethorn his roses.

PROPOSAL

As soon as creditors lose patience
And to their debtors show they've nae sense
By threat'ning geese that lay the golden,
Let Justice see, nor her blindfolden.

And you can wager your last dollar
She'll mak those creditors to tell her,
"T'd better wait till he can settle
Wi' int'rest on the precious metal."

For surely she'd reduce to cost price
The thing named on the bill or invoice,
Nor would she certainly gie int'rest,
And so would end the "dead beat" inquest.

The debtor then put on his mettle
Asks cost price for his unripe cattle,
Pays off the debt, feeling more able,
Although it leaves an empty stable.

ARGUMENT

When credit's gien and taken blindly,
It seems to me to be more kindly
That Justice should see the simple fact
Than judge blindfold like criminal act.

For farmers in faith aye sow the seed
But harvest to fail they've no remead.
Who dare to Providence say "expenses"?
We'd put him in quod as out his senses.

To "Suckers," "Hayseed" seems surer than God
And therefore they shun the plewing o' sod:
But "Hayseed" displeased at the growth o' his debts,
Let's drop the whole business some ev'ning and "gets."

17th April, 1896.

THE FIRST CROW

27TH MARCH, 1896

I

THE Manitoba harbinger
Of Spring has now arrived,
And tho' she's no sol fa singer,
She must not be deprived
Of honours that are due to her
As first upon the scene:
So let us all be true to her
As if she were a frien,
Wi' her "caw, caw, caw."

II

And boys please don't you shoot at her,
As if she were a foe,
For many have nae doubt of her
Who really ought to know.
I'm sure we all must credit her
For killing farmers' foes,
Far more than you can debit her,
So welcome aye the crows
Wi' their "caw, caw, caw."

III

And ne'er forget tho' black's the bird,
She's no a silent thief,
But aye she ca's, which seems absurd,
As that's what brings her grief.
Nor yet by night is she abroad
The farmers' grain to steal,
Like those who ought to be in quod.
She'll ne'er sing to the deil
Her sweet "caw, caw, caw."

IMPROMPTU

*Spoken to Mr. I. J. Baskin—a creditor—on
30th March, 1896.*

I. J. Baskin
Pay without the askin',
Yet don't agree wi' R.B.T.
That spierin' for't is taskin'.



IMPROMPTU

*Spoken to Hugh Fairfield when he shewed me photograph
of ————— (the subject of stanza).*

HERE stands a man,
"An honest thief,"
Built on a plan
That brings him grief:
He sat and ate till he had pain,
Then got up late to steal my grain.



BRITISH WORDS

ALL hail! ye English speaking races
O' ev'ry shape and shade o' faces,
Whate'er your fore-bears; what's the odds?
Ye speak the language o' the gods.

Your frien', the writer o' this scribble,
Has in his veins no ev'n a dribble
O' English bluid, but yet he speaks
The language that can charm the Greeks.

Selah.

Where'er you come frae, North or South,
Or East or West, howe'er uncouth,
If you already canna read it,
Learn English quick: you're sure to need it.

Selah.

For ev'ry man that leaves his country,
Frae mang the masses or the gentry,
He flees to where nocht else is spoken
But English, tho' it's sometimes broken.

Selah.

Tho' when it's interspersed wi' Scotch
Frae common kail to guid hotch potch
It's graded up, and syne mair British
The language is, and no sae skittish.

Selah.

Unlike the tide which ebbs and flows,
The English language outward goes,
As if, by British force once hurled,
'Twould circle and include the world.

And why is this, can any tell?
Unless there's more of heav'n than hell
In British hearts, which so out-pours
In language straight from heav'nly shores.

Then let aloud her accents roll,
As spoken now from pole to pole,
For British words have done the best
For people that have been opprest.

And British words should aye agree
Wi' British laws across the sea:
The world would be the better o't,
Nor threat to cut the British throat.

16th April, 1896.

A TRIFLE

Some one wrote the following "Welcome" on small black-board which hangs above large board in Rookhurst school:

*"Welcome to our teacher!
May love and unity be our aim,
May each pupil receive thy whole
And undivided sympathy."*

I wrote the following on large board below:

WHOF'ER wrote the words on the smaller blackboard,
Spent more of his time than he well could afford:
'Twould have been better spent at his child's arithmetic
Than here teaching teacher to be sympathetic.

R. B. Thomson,
Sec.-Treas.



LAKE DAUPHIN POETS

WHAT's a' this we hear about Dauphin Poets?
"They mak some folk sneer, do the Dauphin Poets":
Some hae the pretence that "they've gotten nae sense"
And are "just an expense," Lake Dauphin Poets.

I'll mak a remark about Dauphin Poets.
Gratuitous work is the Dauphin Poets':
Tho' I've never seen it I must maintain that
It's worth mair than they get for't, Dauphin Poets.

Let's gie some advice to the Dauphin Poets:
'Twill act just like spice on the Dauphin Poets,—
"Keep singin' aye canty as ye clean your shanty,
An' let 'some folk' rant aye at Dauphin Poets."

Syne send your sang roun' ye Lake Dauphin Poets:
 'Twill help make your toun ye Lake Dauphin Poets;
 To keep the folk laughin' wi' good-humoured chaffin'
 Will aye some hearts saf'en ye Dauphin Poets.

A word to who read the Lake Dauphin Poets,—
 Just grade up the breed o' Lake Dauphin Poets:
 Gin ye can't do better just send me a letter,
 Gude faith I'll sune get her some daffin Poets!
 15th June, 1896.

***REMEDIAL BILL**

Dominion Election, 1896.

Electoral Division of Marquette.

Candidates,—Ashdown, Dr. W. Roach, and Marshall

REMEDIAL Bill, I mean Billy Roach,
 Means simply to fill the conservative coach,
 And lying at ease, with wide laughing jaws,
 Rides through, if you please, our Provincial laws.
 He charges meanwhile his dollar a mile,
 And invites the shoe-maker to follow his style!
 And "Lib'ral Conservative," sort o' light black,
 Straps tighter the load on the farmer's bent back.
 22nd June, 1896.

-
- A Dominion bill intended to impose separate schools on Manitoba.

TRIBUTE TO BONNIE JEAN

I

THERE was ance a wee lassie wi' luminous eyes,
 Sitting crying and sobbing wi' heart like to break,
 For her Daddy's great soul had gane hame to the skies,
 And the friens had been sent for, his body to take.

II

Aye the fondest o' Fathers to her he had been,
 (For the bairny's ain Mither had gane to her rest,
 And he brought her straught hame to his ain bonnie Jean,
 Wha forgave e'er the sinner his faut had confess'd.

III

When she saw the wee lassie sae like her ain man,
The same een that she lo'ed, the same lips she could
taste,
She just look'd and she lov'd and ne'er waited but ran,
Slipt her faithfu' arm lovingly roun' the slim waist:

IV

For a' her wee lassies died soon after their birth,
An' a' gladsome-like joy rose in that honest breast
And grew stronger and stronger and ended in mirth
Like a' joys that are real ev'n the joys o' the blest.)

V

But alas! for the great like the simple must die,
And the body o' Burns lay cauld on the bed,
An' a' those that he lov'd could do naething but cry,
For they couldna tak flight wi' the soul that had fled.

VI

But it meant mair to her did the death o' her Dad
Than it did to Bob, Willie or Jamie Glencairn,
For ev'n then as 'tis now the guid folk had a fad
That a love-child was ne'er like anither wee bairn.

VII

What a farce! What a play on the words o' the Lord
Wha said: "Suffer the children to come unto Me":
Nor a hint nor a sign in the whole o' His Word
That some weans should be left to their ain misery.

VIII

Nor was this ane a moment! For long as she liv'd
Burns' widow was Mother to her, and "Dear Betty"
Grew up to be lov'd, and to sing till she deav'd
The guid folk; was good, and my goodness how pretty!
And married a true British soldier, aye and then
Had weans, lads and lassies, wha of course in their turns
Hae had bairns wha had bairns that are women and men.
And ye needna be fear't for descendants o' Burns.

"Betty" became known as Elizabeth Hyslop Burns, daughter of Robert Burns and Ann Park, niece of Mrs. Hyslop, landlady of the Globe tavern, Dumfries. Betty was born in or about the year 1790, and after having been nursed for two or three years in Edinburgh, she, on decease of her mother, was taken by Burns to his home in Dumfries, where she was brought up with care and affection by Jean Armour, Mrs. Burns. She had recollections of her father's affection for her and she remembered his funeral. She called Mrs. Burns mother, and continued to live with her until Betty was married to John Thomson, a soldier in Dumfries. She and her husband, after his military service, went to reside in Pollokshaws where he resumed his original trade of weaving. They had a large family among whom was Robert Burns Thomson, a musician and poet, the father of the author of this book. Mrs. Burns until her decease continued her motherly care and affection for Mrs. Thomson. A letter from the former to the latter is quoted as follows:

Dumfries, 20th February, 1833.

"My Dear Betty:

I have this moment heard of an opportunity which I have long wished for to Glasgow, and enclose a guinea which I regret to say is all I can spare at present. It will procure some little things for the children. I shall send this to Mr. Bennet's care.

I have no time for particulars. I can only say my general health is not bad, but I am very infirm, and I seldom leave home. Miss Newall is with me and a great comfort she is. She desires me to present her best regards. Sarah is in perfect health. Mrs. Parker is in London. I shall be glad to know how you get on in these hard and threatening times. Remember me kindly to your husband.

I am still your

affectionate Mother,

JEAN BURNS."

TO MR. ROBERT GRAHAM, "DUNDEE"

Acknowledging receipt of present of seed potatoes.

MY Dear "Dundee" your tatties guid,
Sae "white inside" yet blush sae red,
Just mind me o' your flesh and bluid,
Your lasses braw.
I'll plant them soon's the yirth be rid
O' winter's snaw.

They'll sune grow up an' stan' in raws,
An' wear the bonniest o' green shaws:
Thus drest in best o' summer braws
They'll toss their flow'rs,
And stan' in pride full-fledged Mammas
Like bairns o' yours.

October 1896.



**REPLY TO A YOUNG LADY WHO WROTE
ASKING FOR A PUP**

DEAR girl, you ask me for a pup,
I think I understand you?
I'll only say just hurry up,
The best o' them I'll hand you.

There's Bob and Jack, and James Glencairn,
And Bill, a perfect deevil,—
Although he is a bonnie bairn
I wadna wish you evil.

October 1896.

'TIS WINTER

'Tis Winter! and our Manitoban soil
Aweary of her travail goes to rest
Well earned, like mother after gracious toil
Asleep, with bosom snow-white blanket prest.

'Tis Winter! and the blizzard's angry blast
With piercing shriek screams warning to our world,
While, flag-like, streams the snow from polar mast,
By unseen pow'r in nature's law unfurled.

'Tis Winter! and God's allies in the task
Of Providence, engaged in first of arts,
To "feed His lambs," throw off their soil made mask,
And clean, their off'rings take to nearest marts.

'Tis Winter! and while favoured farmers speed
To steady market with the golden grain,
Some hail-struck neighbours stay at home and read
Of prices that impel to try again.

'Tis Winter! and the cold so merciless,
So like the law's fell grasp on those who fail
While wooing fickle fortune's proffered bliss,
Heeds not the unprepared and poor's low wail.

'Tis Winter! but the days will soon roll by,
And spring-time with its warmth will come again;
And summer flowers; and birds with joyous cry
Will emulate the lover's sweet refrain.
All nature wakened thus from winter's sleep,
With nerve-like thrill, will take the seed that's sown,
And work within her mysteries so deep,
That none can understand but God alone.

FATHER CHRISTMAS

CANTO I

Ho! ho! ha! ha! I'm here again you see,
To deck with toys your little Christmas tree,
To raise once more my wonder working wand,
And make all children happy in the land.

You call me "Father Christmas," "Santa Claus,"
And come to see me in your Sunday braws,
And yet you never ask from whence I came,
Nor ask me if I e'er bore other name.

True poets aye enlighten as they sing,
And pow'r with pleasure to their hearers bring,
So Father Christmas, poet for a time,
Will tell his story now in simple rhyme.

CANTO II

Long, long ago in one of Scotland's Isles,
That now is owned by one of the Argyles,
The great MacTavish reigned, whose only son
His travels in the East had just begun.

We speak of many hundred years ago
When the MacTavish had a dreadful foe
In the MacLeod, of Isle of Skye the Lord,
With whom to fight MacT. could scarce afford.

MacTavish simply means the son of Tom,
And just "as Romans do, do we in Rome,"
So there in Rome, MacTavish was Thomson,
And thereby hangs my tale when all is done.

For years John Thomson travelled in the East,
And found the knowledge gained a joyous feast,
And strong imbued with Christian love to men,
He turned his beaming face t'ward home again.

CANTO III

You've felt perhaps the blizzard's freezing pow'r,
Or quaked beneath the thunder's roar and show'r,
Or quiv'ring with affright in railway crash
Been crush'd in gruesome heap and bloody splash.

But come with me where monster seas doth meet,
Where crashing thunders roar 'mong blizzard's sleet,
And waves clench waves and shrieking rise to heav'n,
Then down in deep abyss their sides are riv'n.

Dark night, but lurid light'ning in the sky,
That shows some horrid rocks are just hard by,
And see! the bark that bears John Thomson home
Is hurtled by the waves amongst the foam.

CANTO IV

A stalwart, bruised youth found by the crowd,
Is carried to the castle o' MacLeod,
And there is gently tended back to life
By one he vow'd and swore should be his wife.

When on his feet he asked in anxious tones
For things brought from the East he called his drones,
And played on them so sweet and yet so loud
He fairly won the heart of Miss MacLeod.

But lovers' vows are sometimes thrust aside.
The Chieftain interfered and hid the bride:
John Thomson and his friends all searched in vain,
For lovely Flora ne'er was seen again.

And thus it was from searching all the cairns,
The young folk soon were named John Tamson's bairns:
"We're a' John Tamson's bairns" became the cry,
And bairnies' Mas gave John much sympathy.

The sympathy to admiration grew,
And admiration gave a love-like hue
To mutual acts of kindness and good-will,
For John was rich and spent his cash with skill.

CANTO V

Requited love, when foil'd by fools and knaves,
Poignant reigns; each heart life-long enslaves;
But whiles to lov'd one's close presentment turns,
As did the yearning heart of Robert Burns.

So 'twas with John: he scann'd each comely face,
But searching look of his ne'er brought disgrace,
For something in his mien and from his eyes,
Produc'd but kindly nod of quaint surprise.

Train'd by himself to give folk no offence,
His ev'ry move bespoke benevolence.
As years roll'd on John grew in grace and size,
And often led in councils of the wise.

A trav'ler of repute, he oft would roam,
But aye at Christmas time was found at home,
At home, and with the newest thing in toys,
To civilize wee lassies and wee boys.

One most momentous journey John had made,
Returning with a fir-tree and a spade,
A box of huge dimensions long and wide,
For landing which they had to 'wait the tide.

Forbye, and by the Pope's and King's behests,
Saints Andrew, George and Patrick had for guests,
Who all in secret work'd, like common men,
Within the largest house, a "But an' Ben."

CANTO VI

At last! the sprig-decked door is opened wide,
And wives are charged a kiss to get inside,
Which John receives, and soon is dubb'd Kiss Mas,
By all the little folk wi' loud hussas.

Hurrah! the fun begins and each one sees
The very first and best o' Christmas trees;
And John tells how three friends had hung in rows
The toys, and simply ends "I sent ta claus."

"Ta claus" referred to were some tartan kilts
Just meant to hide the hurdies o' the Celts,
Who, after shouts that made the welkin ring,
To tune o' bagpipes, danced the Hielan fling.

Meanwhile the violin had done its part:
A foursome reel was danced wi' a' their heart
By Andrew, John and George, and honest Pat.
Soon after which, they all in council sat.

The three ambassadors informed John
That he should live for aye and aye be known
As Father Kiss Mas and as Saint Ta Claus,
Now Father Christmas and your Santa Claus.

(Bows and retires).

14th December, 1896.

ADDRESS TO A CHRISTMAS TREE

DEAR emblem of an all-wise Providence,
Who something hath for all that to thee come;
Dear symbol of a friend so long gone hence,
Thou'rt sacrificed to bring us nearer home.
Tho' torn thy roots from mother earth hath been,
Love lives in thee and keeps thee ever green.

When on thy native soil how nobly good,
True representative of best of men,
Thou humbly bent thy head when winds were rude,
But gentler zephyrs made thee smile again.
Meanwhile thy boughs a shield and shelter gave
To humbler friends who now mourn near thy grave.

Resplendent in thy life and pure of heart,
Like Him whose birthday we so gladly hold,
In dying thou hast done the better part,
And raised thy value o'er an hundred fold.
Thy light doth shine on all our Christmas toys,
An earthly foretaste of our heav'nly joys.

With love-lit eyes we gaze upon thy form,
With thankful hearts we praise the Lord for thee,
With cheerful steps and hands we now perform
Our last strange rites on thee, sweet Christmas tree,
For ere departing to our place of rest
We give part of thy raiment to each guest.

18th December, 1896.



**LITERARY CLUB SOCIAL,
29th December, 1896**

MORN

THE moon led in the morning with a smile,
The sun in disapproval play'd mirage,
Windows wink'd to windows many a mile,
While Johnny Frost, amused, twirl'd his moustache.

NOON

A young man comes for Auntie and her pies,
Determined to return at night for Madge.
The wind a gentle whistle gives and sighs,
And then unkindly falls into a rage.

AND NIGHT

A fearful blizzard blows from west to east;
The driven snow hides o'er the new made trail:
Farewell to pies and literary feast;
We go to bed, and morn-moon's work bewail.

* 10th November, 1908.

"Madge" was Mr. Thomson's oldest daughter Margaret, later Mrs. Edward J. Whitbread.

GREAT BRITAIN

ARISE my soul! From meaner themes arise!
And dwell in patriotic strains awhile.
Let mind on mem'ry soar above the skies,
And look again on much lov'd British Isle.

From clearer view, portentous clouds obstruct,
Wherein a blood red crescent moon doth lurk,
While Great Bear's glitt'ring eyes mine own conduct
To deeper gloom, to brood on Russe and Turk.

Anon an eagle's wing hides out my view:
I see one haughty eye, and hear one scream,
Which brings, dear Isle, a swift reply from you,
That spoils a German Emperor's sweet dream.

Then flashing stars, midst Borealis' stripes,
Get strangely mixt midst crosses two or three,
But disentangling, show two hands in gripes,—
That proves the Yanks and British friends shall be.

At last! at last her sea girt shores I see!
One long, ecstatic gaze! A thousand years
Shall ne'er efface, dear Island of the sea,
That one long look which banish'd all my fears.

15th January, 1897.

WOOD, AN' MAIR O'T AN' A'

GUID lasses should leuk for guid men,
E'en mair sae I think here awa,
Whare feckless anes canna weel fen'
In winters o' Manitoba:
For bannocks aye need to be bakit,
An' firin' is hauf o' the fecht;
Green willow fires need to be rakit

Unless ye like bread wi' some wecht.
Wood, an' mair o't an' a',
Wood, an' mair o't an' a':
Oh are na they vera weel aff,
That hae wood, an' mair o't an' a'.

A woman's work here is aye hard,
Though everything is brought to han'.
To be without wood in the yard
Is mair than maist women can stan'.
A body can come through the simmer
Wi' chips an' the wood that has fa'n,
But winter's too hard for a kimmer
To gather the sticks aff the lan'.
Wood, an' mair o't an' a',
Wood, an' mair o't an' a':
Oh are na they vera weel aff,
That hae wood, an' mair o't an' a'.

If e'er I get married mysel,
A bargain I'll mak e'er I wed:
The heat o' the fire I maun smell,
E'er I shall jump out o' my bed!
A day or twa's wood but an' ben aye,
I'm sure is no muckle to ask:
A Jockey that's fond o' his Jenny
Should try an' aye lighten her task.
Wood, an' mair o't an' a',
Wood, an' mair o't an' a':
Oh are na they vera weel aff,
That hae wood, an' mair o't an' a'.

12th February, 1897.

TILL THE SOIL

TEND the flock and till the soil!
First of arts our great employment!
Earn from Providence the smile,
Independence, most enjoyment.
Cheerfully we'll sing and toil,
Tend our flock and till the soil.

Some to cities wend their way,
Noblest manual labour scorning:
Their reward a bigger pay,
Finer dress their forms adorning.
As for us we'll sing and toil,
Tend our flock and till the soil.

Which of all the arts invite
All who willing are and able?
"Come, take of our sup and bite,
Learn our trade and load your table."
None but ours, who sing and toil,
Tend our flock and till the soil.

Hearken to the hungry horde
Cramp'd in cities overflowing:
Point them to our festive board;
Bring them where the food is growing.
Haply they will help us toil,
Tend our flock and till the soil.

20th March, 1897.

MARCH

Now that winter's grip relaxes
Under pressure from above,
And the woodmen leave their axes
To begin their homeward move;
While the snow is surely thawing
Under Spring-time's gentle breeze,
With the crows already cawing
From the branches of the trees,—
There's a sort of an uneasiness
In every living thing,
There's a loving sort of breeziness,
True harbinger of Spring,
With the pigs and poultry frolicking
As happy as you please,
And the lads and lasses rollicking
And planning marriage bees.

There's a solemn sort of sadness
In the way that March begins.
Diagnosis points to madness
If she doesn't set loose the winds:
But the outcome of the badness
Is the Manitoba twins
Spring and Summer! There is gladness!
Winter dies for winter's sins.
Then hurrah for Manitoba!
Work good farmers for your life!
Time just melts like any snowba',
Quickly kiss your bonnie wife,
Then hitch your oxen or ^{your} horses
To the harrows or the plow:
Time so quickly runs its courses
Take advantage of it now.

30th March, 1897.

QUEEN VICTORIA'S DIAMOND JUBILEE

For sixty years, "God save the Queen"
Has storm'd the King of Kings on high,
For sixty years an answer's seen,
The outcome of a people's cry,—
A Queen belov'd as none on earth,
Since God Himself gave Kings their birth.

Compared to monarchs of the world,
Unconsciously we all compare,
Our Gracious Queen hath charms unfurl'd
That prove her "fairest of the fair,"
For prince and peasant bow the knee,
Yet know they're freest of the free.

No trampling on the thoughts of men
Brings bombs to breed hysteria;
No sword that's mightier than pen
To point to a Siberia;
No! No! Our Queen's own printed word
Proves pen is mightier than sword.

To reign for sixty years and more
Meant living with intensity,
And few have liv'd to see three score
Through change of such immensity,
As wife and mother, widow'd Queen,
With cares of pomp and state between.

Her throne the little British Isle,
Her footstool Australasia,
Her hand to East or West meanwhile
Beats time to quaint fantasia
Of instruments of ev'ry clime
From rudest reed to harp sublime.

So widely known her gentle sway,
So kind of heart thro' ev'ry phase,

That children prattling by the way
Remember her in songs of praise:
Superbest influence she sheds
On infant minds and hoary heads.

While autocrats in foreign lands
Use check lines so intolerant,
Her gentler rule with gentler hands
Sets free the heads now jubilant,
And manhood suffrage, manhood's right,
Is us'd to prove that right is might.

A wider sphere is woman's now,
Since woman's signature freed men:
No more in ev'rything they bow,
But weapons wield from lance to pen;
And learn'd in sciences and art,—
Yield nought to men but heart for heart.

Auspiciously progressive arts
By leaps and bounds have sped their way,
And British ships to foreign marts
Are forc'd by steam to pierce the spray;
While conquer'd electricity
Lights, speaks, moves with velocity.

In first of arts, fresh fields are till'd,
On Manitoba's fertile plains;
And hearts, with joy for gran'ries fill'd,
Rejoice to ease fell famine's pains:
For British subjects brethren are
To all the world, both near and far.

That weaving takes the second place
Is right, and lo! the speedy loom
Sends shuttle flying o'er the "race"
Thro' "sheds" of ev'ry shade and bloom,
And all demands are satisfied:
The world is clothed and turns with pride.

Each house of sanitary build
Gives homes of health and comfort sure.
In ev'ry burgh a dean of guild,
The builders' greatest thoughts secure,
And architects don't fail to find
Fit dwellings for our human-kind.

A people fed and clothed and hous'd,
What more can righteous man expect?
Our bosom heaves, our soul's arous'd,
Can we that precious soul neglect?
Ah no! and God's own word is preach'd
Free as the wind, and all are reach'd:

Food for the temple of the soul;
Food for the soul itself is cheap;
Food for the mind to train the whole;
Food for the strong and those who creep;
"Books for the Bairns," books for the old;
Books for one penny, bought and sold.

Promiscuously all can take
Of sciences and arts their choice:
All kinds of men the world shall make.
Sing of them all with cheerful voice:
A peaceful reign has help'd them all.
Ring out the theme, let curtain fall.

ENCORE! (?)

In answer to your loud encores,
With curtain down but lights not out,
We plead enchoric kinds of chores,
But just before we face about
We'll give our Queen just three times three!
Da capo! on her Jubilee.

ADDRESS TO AN OX

Being led to stockyard for shipment.

GET up Bob! Gee! Get up you brute:
You're sold to save a lawyer's suit.
And don't be thrawn now at the last:
I'm sure I never drove ye fast;
And seeing you hae got nae load,
We'll hae a chat along the road.

Be steady now! Keep off my toes,
Or fegs I'll switch you on the nose:
I'm sure there's room on roads for twa,
So you keep gee and I'll keep haw,
And sure as this bit rope's between,
I'll prove that yet I'm your best frien.

You see Bob, mortgage gods are rife,
Though waur to keep than weans and wife,
For they wha pray them for supplies
Maun yearly offer sacrifice,
Or house and hame they'd gobble up,
Nor leave their worshippers a sup.

A sacrifice mair ways than ane
You are, for this our senseless sin:
For less than half your cost you're sold
Though twice the weight in beef I'm told;
For this I must apologise,
Though sure that you don't darn my eyes.

Compar'd to Dandy, your auld mate,
You'll meet betimes a better fate,
For he, if work'd beyond his speed,
May break his heart and drop down dead
And then be left to feed wild beasts:
While you'll be serv'd at human feasts

Still in apologetic mood
I'll praise ye aye as praise I should,
And tell how you could turn the sod
Or Brandon way aye took the road
Wi' loads o' hay, and ne'er got stuck
Tho' trails were steep or soft as muck.

An honest ox! To such is giv'n
Sure entrance to the oxen's heav'n;
And I'll not leave you to your fate
Till you are safe within the gate.
Unlike some christians, you'll move on
Till haply you may reach the throne?
If not, well, at the very least
For subjects you will make a feast,
And help to strengthen our Premier,
Or as you're no soft-footed steer
But always were a toughish tyke,
You'll follow Sifton to Klondyke,
And warm the cockles o' some heart,
Who, while he's raking in the dirt
For gold, will just remember me
And send a chunk to R.B.T.

But whoa Bob! Whoa! for here we are.
We'll part for better or for waur:
There! you're within, while I'm without,
Which settles ev'ry fear and doubt.
I'll wander hame; you'll stay with these
Who of your heav'n doth keep the keys.

20th October, 1897.

THANKSGIVING

A THANKFU' heart through a' our lives,
A thankfu' heart for weans and wives,
A thankfu' heart and forks and knives
And a goose, in Manitoba.

A thankfu' heart for goodness gi'en,
A thankfu' heart to man's best Frien',
A thankfu' heart for fat or lean
In each house, in Manitoba.

Let a' true hearts where thanks are gaun
Aye scorn to prey on brither man,
And aye haud out a helpin' haun
To ithers, in Manitoba.

A day of thanksgiving indeed
Wad be nae day without a feed!
Let fatted calf and turkey bleed,
We've come hame, in Manitoba.

Her cauld our appetite but whets:
When warmth comes roun' ilk ane forgets
Her blizzards keen and life's back-sets,
And shouts thanks! for Manitoba.

25th November, 1897.



COMMEMORATIVE HOMESTEADS

(Victorian Order)

LET our Legislature listen,
And our people all agree,
And our good Queen's eyes will glisten
On her own bright jubilee.
Let us lay out dairy sections
For old country dairy maids,

And assign them, for protection's
Sake, the best of our young blades.

Let these homesteads be exempted
From the ordinary rule
That has often homesteads emptied
When ruled over by a fool.
Let it be no speculation
That can reach a mortgagee,
But an off'ring from the nation
On Victoria's jubilee.

Give her Majesty the first one,
And the finest in the land,
Where in future, by excursion,
We can meet a happy band
To commemorate aye yearly
On the twenty-fourth of May
The good Queen we love so dearly,—
E'en for ever and a day.

Forebye, just to tell you the truth o' the matter,—
A wretched condition's to be without butter,
And this very good cure, Sir, I fain would suggest,
For I think it "the cheese" if it only were pressed.

1897



DOCTOR FLEMING

MOURN, Mithers, mourn! Weep, Mithers, weep!
For best o' friends now gone to sleep;
Ne'er to return to soothe your pain,
Or help bring hame your next wee wean,
Or cheer ye wi' the kindest laugh
To sweeten aye the drugs ye quaff,
Or sober, guid advice to gie,
To point ye how to live or die.

Mourn, Brithers, mourn! Greet, Brithers, greet!
For ane we aye rejoic'd to meet;
Whose hamely doric ne'er was hid
Frae folk that claim'd the Scottish bluid;
Whose soul, like electricity,
Was in his haun-shake, voice and e'e;
Whose oft-wrung heart was bound to fail
Some day, and leave us a' to wail.

He's gone! Aye, Doctor Fleming's gone!
But he'll be welcom'd at the throne
By Him he lov'd; and hosts of men
Shall shout to meet their friend again.
Then joyfully they'll hear him say
His thanks on our thanksgiving day:
He'll ask in gentlest, heart-felt thrills
That we'll be sav'd frae a' our ills.

The late Dr. Fleming of Brandon was meant. Mr. Thomson felt deeply grateful to the doctor for much kindness, and admired his skill and sincerity.

LINES

*Inscribed on a book sent to Edward Jabez Whitebread,
Christmas 1897.*

To Sir Edward J. Whitebread,—that is to be
If he keeps up the pace through futurity:
Though should anything hap and he miss being knighted,
May he still reach the place where all wrongs shall be
 righted,
And a crown, 'stead of spurs and a sword, be his due
In the kingdom above where he'll meet me and you.

LETTER TO W. T. STEAD

Minnedosa P.O.,
Manitoba,
1st July, 1897.

To W. T. Stead,
Mowbray House,
Norfolk St., Strand,
W. C. London, Eng.

Dear Sir:—

Re the "Queen's English."
As an admirer of the English language,

THO' when its interspersed wi' Scotch
Frae common kail to guid hotch potch
It's graded up, and syne mair British
The language is, and no sae skittish—

yours truly—representing as it were the illiterate—would like to make a few gratuitous remarks, which, no doubt, will be worth what is charged for them! But as a gratuitous writer, writing free gratis and for naething to the local press, on the brotherhood of man principle, I cannot make an exception in this case in order to raise its value, although you must be getting rich, while we are all poor.

To come right down to business then, could you not manage to keep the words "English" and "England" out of the language altogether, just to keep down ill will unless of course when used as a local term? Since "Bannock-burn," well, we'll say since the union, "English army," "English interests," "English battles," "English navy," "Queen of England," etc., have all gone down like castor oil with some of the British subjects, even in Manitoba: so that, while it would be hard to find anywhere a more loyal man than myself, I'll be hanged if I wouldn't think twice before I'd fight for the "Queen of England," yet I'd grab a musket as eagerly as I would my best girl, for "Queen Victoria." Your "English" reminds me of a saying

of my Grandfather's, "Gree, bairns, gree, for I hate to see peace!" You would extirpate scotticisms from your lingo! but from what I can see your

"ENGLISH" this and "English" that,
Kills the Scot~~ch~~ and rouses Pat;
Ignores the Welshman a' thegither,
And puts the three in quite a swither,
Whether,—when they mean to squat—
They'll go where they'll aye be quat
O' "English" this, and "English" that.

You know the virtue that is contained in the British language as it is,—

"Boys, mind ye how when far frae hame,
A Scotch commander, Colonel Graham,
Hailing frae Glesca, men an' a',
Brought up his 'Keelies' in a raw,
And pointing to Arabi's men,
Altho' he kent death was their fate,
Cried: 'Begnets on your rifle en'
And charge them up the Gallowgate!" "

The weel kent words gang to the heart,
The cauld steel's to the musket welded,
The yell, the thrill, the angry dart,
The crash, the enemy has melted.

To commemorate the Victorian era then I would suggest that a name should be invented in place of that English red rag which would at once allay ill feeling, and supply a want: a name that would, being interpreted, mean Mac, Pat, Bull & Co., "warranted not made in Germany."

Yours faithfully,

R. B. THOMSON.

A GUID NEW YEAR

A GUID new year to ane an' a'
That's here in Manitoba;
A health to them that's far awa'
Frae friens in Manitoba!
Although we've crossed the stormy wave,
Undreamt of dangers a' to brave,
We're kept by Him that's strong to save,
E'en here in Manitoba.

Wi' nature's bafflin' tricks we strive
Out here in Manitoba:
Yet manage aye to live and thrive
E'en here in Manitoba.
If clear'd o' artificial ills,
That mars our march and progress kills,
We'd laugh at winter's storms and chills
Out here in Manitoba.

Oh wha aye self wad sacrifice
For folks in Manitoba?
And push for peace and cash despise
Out here in Manitoba
Let them fa' in, baith rank an' file,
And turn the tide for those that toil
Wi' pleugh and spade in best o' soil
Out here in Manitoba.

Ance hail'd twice help'd should be our cry
Out here in Manitoba:
"Recuperate!" instead of "Die!"
Aye here in Manitoba.
And as for tax sales, seed note debts,
These a' breed migratory pets:
The poor dead beat just up and "gets,"
Ev'n here in Manitoba.

A guid new year to ane an' a'
Out here in Manitoba!
The weaker anes we'll ne'er let fa'
Out here in Manitoba:
For wiser plans and wiser laws
We'll try each year in best o' cause,
An' earn the outside world's applause
And men for Manitoba.

December 1897.



A BURGESS AND A MAGISTRATE

*"Wife of S. Burgess, a daughter, 1st January, 1898: wife of
Police Magistrate Logan, a son, 2nd January, 1898."*

ACCORDING to the Tribune's tale,
Good wives have raised their slogan:
And ninety-eight though young and frail
Bore Burgess in, then Logan.
And so our youngest magistrate
Has shewn example to the state,
For on a Burgess he did wait
To see her through the bogan.
Long be his life: may't be his fate
To wear a judge's togan.

The two wee things despising wings
Came each in a toboggan;
"As warm as toast," and nearly lost
In blankets white as snow-gaun,
Caught by a bed post in the way,
Quite suddenly head first they lay
Out in the cold at break o' day,
Wi' faces that were woe-gone,
Then gave a yell that seemed to say,
"Send Burgess here, and Logan."

Wi' heart and voice they made their choice
O' parents for their training;
Nor Klondyke's gold, of wealth untold,
Could buy the love that's raining
On those wee tots, while in their cots,
As wi' toom wames, or parching throats,
They cry for coos or nannie goats,
Or something fit for drinking,
Tho' mither's milk were a' their thoughts,
Were credit gi'en for thinking.

Blest be each Mother in the land,
Wi' husband's love ne'er ceasing:
Let them rejoicing, hand in hand,
Move on, their kind increasing.
And take this comfort, while they stray
O'er Manitoba's prairie hay,
No nobler work is here to dae
Than raising population.
Be their reward to know and say,
They've helped to make a nation.

January, 1898.

WEARY MOTHER COME TO BED

Weary Mother! come to bed:
Gin ye winna drive, be led;
Love is better 'live than dead;
Sleepy Mother! come to bed.

Weary Mother! come to bed:
Care lines don't improve your head;
Ev'n the sparrows, they are fed;
Sleepy Mother! come to bed.

Weary Mother! come to bed:
Son, not Mother, died and bled;
Sacrific'd was He instead;
Sleepy Mother! come to bed.

Weary Mother! come to bed:
If you trust Him, He'll be glad;
Pray'rs o' ours to Him have sped;
Sleepy Mother! come to bed.

Weary Mother! come to bed:
Leave the house for us to red;
Silently we'll work and tread;
Sleepy Mother! come to bed.

Weary Mother! come to bed:
We would have you honoured
Ere the spark of life be fled;
Sleepy Mother! come to bed.

Weary Mother! come to bed:
We'll get aye our daily bread;
Lay your needle down, and thread;
Sleepy Mother! come to bed.

Weary Mother! come and rest:
Mothers ne'er should be opprest;
But on earth, and heav'n be blest;
Weary Mother! come to rest.

January, 1898.



FAITHFU' MAGGIE FORRESTER

A Tribute To An Aged Friend.

COULD ane do justice to the theme
And words flow rich and in a stream
My pen wad cover half a ream
 In praise o' Maggie Forrester:
But a' the poets in the world,
Tied heads by hair sae lang and curl'd
Wad die before they'd hae unfurl'd
 Sangs worthy Maggie Forrester.

Sae faithfu' to a sister's bairn,
She plied langsyne the smoothin' airn,
To purpose guid, their bread to earn,
Did faithfu' Maggie Forrester:
And mair! when later on in life,
That nephew lost a faithfu' wife,
For his weans, started in the strife
Again, was Maggie Forrester.

God help the faithless friens o' folk,
Such as gie stricken men a stroke
And count it gain, (a clever joke!)
Point them to Maggie Forrester:
Her life, a life of helpfulness
To orphan and the mitherless,
Will end in endless blessedness
For faithfu' Maggie Forrester.

January 1898.

IN GOOD SHIP POMERANIAN

IN good ship Pomeranian
We've left our native shore, man,
Where we may ne'er return again
Her beauties to explore, man;
But while we're on the raging main,
To mirth and music we'll give rein,
And dance to bagpipes' cheery strain
As ne'er we danc'd before, man.

The genial Captain Fairfull has
A smile for ev'ry one, man.
He and the mates are careful as
If wives were here this run, man:
The engineers tho' black o' face,
Think "slow but sure" is no disgrace
And so they keep the Captain's pace,
As if 'twere best o' fun, man.

The cooks are best you'll find afloat,
Wi' steward "hand and glove," man:
They mak a feast o' what he's got,
As we've had time to prove, man.
The purser is the doctor's twin
In soothing ills that are akin,
For pain and ennui a' rin,
When they are on the move, man.

The crew and passengers alike
Are just like auld friens met, man:
They 'gree like bumbees in a byke
Content wi' a' they get, man;
But when we reach Canadian soil,
We'll swarm, then turn to honest toil,
Till seeing our heav'nly Father's smile
We'll flee to His yerd yett, man.

June, 1898.

In the year 1898 Mr. Thomson visited Scotland, and returned to Canada in the ship Pomeranian.

CANADA'S HEROES

OUR Queen Mother calls us to battle,
And to battle we willingly go.
Already the guns' roar and rattle
Have been heard from a valorous foe:
Already the maimed are returning,
And already some heroes are slain.
The hearts of more heroes are burning
Just to reach yonder blood-baptiz'd plain.

Ten thousand miles! Oh, what a distance!
And a thousand or two from the shore.
The foe shows such stubborn resistance
As our race seldom met with before.
Hurry up! Burnish arms! Be ready
For the rail, then the rush o'er the wave.

Bide training! You'll learn to be steady:
We all know you're the bravest of brave.

Cheers of welcome await you out yonder,
When your glittering arms come in view:
And the hearts of your friends grow the fonder
When waves o'er you the red white and blue.
When the crash of the battle's subsided,
When the bugle sounds "homeward" again,
By the God of all battles be guided,
All your lives and for ever, amen.

30th December, 1899.



CANADIANS FOR THE QUEEN

CANADIAN men, freemen and fearless,
Born mid perils of frosts and of snows;
Men inur'd to life's hardships and peerless
At battling with natural foes;
Men of fame on the foam of the river,
Where the rafts need the guiding of gods
To secure, to control, to deliver
From divers divergent wrong roads;
Men who conquer the wildest of prairie;
Men who tame the wild bronchos to plow,—
You are called by our "Mother Queen Fairy"
To stand by her, fight for her now.

Our good Mother Queen did not want fighting:
Our good Mother Queen's pray'rs were for peace;
Our good Mother Queen's wrongs though, want righting,
More room for her wond'rous increase.
So our Mother Queen's sons are at battle:
Are at war with the sons of the Dutch,
As to who the moot question shall settle,
"The earth is the Lord's," and if such,

Whether freedom for all is the meaning
And whose freedom is freest of all.
To Joe's notion the British are leaning:
The Boers of course stick to Oom Paul.

'Tis no hate in your hearts you are showing,
No avenging of blood spilt before:
But the warmth of true loyalty glowing,
When your Queen's forc'd to conquer the Boer.
Your spontaneous expression of love
Has a higher and more noble cause:
The soul's heart inspir'd by high heav'n above
Responds to His unwritten laws.
Well, you're ask'd this great question to settle,
And we're proud that you take the thing up,
And we know that you're all men of mettle,
And think that the Boers you can whip.

8th January, 1900.

**OH 'TIS EASY TO PART WITH SOME
OTHER'S DEAR ONE**

Oh 'tis easy to part with some other's dear one,
To hurrah! as the good ship speeds on,—
But there's some one heart-broken for those that are gone,
Aye there's some one that feels all alone.
Oh the sea may seem safe, and the ship may look strong,
As we bid some one's dear one goodbye,
But our cheerfulness looks to some others all wrong,
For there's some one feels ready to die.

Oh we sing of the grandeur and glory of war,
When we've no dear ones there of our own,
But the terrors of combat, and groans from afar
Find an echo in some one's low moan.
Oh may ours be the duty, on this side the grave,—
Shall we pledge it? rich, poor, great and small,—
Both to comfort and care for those left by the brave
Who for Queen, kin, and country may fall.

10th January, 1900.

28TH FEBRUARY, 1900

THERE's great rejoicing at "Hope Hill":
Twice blest we've been this day.
Let us a new Spring poem trill:
Our hens began to lay.
The other blessing's at "The Ranch":
There's great rejoicing there,—
Our fam'ly tree has sprung a branch,
My old son's son and heir,—
And I'm a grandfather.

When joys of fatherhood were mine,
Ev'n like my Great-grand-sire,
I purified the Scottish line
With some poetic fire:
And now my hopes, like his, are great
That in a later day,
'Twill be my dear descendant's fate
To sing a sweeter lay
Than his old grandfather

Oh that each grandfather might see
In his succeeding race
Much better men from blemish free,
To fill his forebear's place!
That! that would be⁴ glorious thought
To cheer the days that pass:
Then! then we all might "go to pot,"
While they go see their lass
Far from a grandfather.

"Hope Hill" was the name of Mr. Thomson's home on his farm,
and "The Ranch" was where lived his oldest son, Robert.

WE'RE MARCHING OFF TO AFRICA

A ditty for the boys of the next contingent.

TUNE:—Napolcon used to say there was no such word as fail.

WE'RE marching off to Africa to have a little fight.
As to what it's all about? Why hang it all!
To back the good Old Country, it is simply our delight.
So here's to Joe, and Joubert, and Oom Paul!
 When the blooming war is o'er,
 And we're home again once more,
We'll have many a tale to tell about the veldt,
 How our gallant comrades fought,
 As their lives they dearly bought,
After diff'rent kinds of powder had been smelt.

CHORUS:

"Rule Britannia, Britannia rules the waves,
Britons never, never, never shall be slaves."

To leave the girls behind us is the hardest thing of all,
Has been known since ever men began to fight:
The lasses like to see us take the road at duty's call
And the sound of martial music's their delight;
 But they'll miss us when we're gone,
 Just how much will ne'er be known,
As for "Africa's sunny fountain" we embark.
 But whene'er our mission's done,
 With both gold and glory won,
Why to wedding march we'll surely toe the mark.

CHORUS: "Rule Britannia," etc.

TO THE VALOROUS SLAIN

A HYMN for the heroes who died at the war,
Yea, a tribute to valourous men of each side,
Who for Queen, kin or country have foughten and died,
A song for the slain of the British and Boer.

A hymn for the heroes who died at the war,
To the men who spontaneously leapt to the strife,
When they well could have stayed by a sweetheart or wife,
A song for colonials buried afar.

Lament we! for those of the great sacrifice
To the spirit of freedom enshrined in each breast,
To the spirit of love that each hero confessed
As he sprung to the sword at the word of the wise.

Proud! proud are Canadians between sea and sea,
Of their gallant young heroes that sleep neath the veldt.
Where they charged the brave Boers, or in skirmishing knelt
To receive as they gave, glory's door-opening key.

The moaning of loving ones reach thy lone graves,
Commingling with echoes of triumphant song,
And the shouting of millions the echoes prolong;
Borne abroad by the winds on the breasts of the waves.

Thy death gallant Arnold hath not been in vain,
For the dying of one shall a recompense bring,
And thy *"little black devils" thy requiem sing,
While they pledge thee their king of the valorous slain.

Brave work once again in this war-polished world,
Though lives have been shortened that ill could be spared,
Leaving wounds in our hearts that can ne'er be repaired,
Till the last trumpets sound that all war flags be furled.

17th March, 1900.

* "Little Black Devils," an epithet applied to the Winnipeg boys by General Middleton during the Northwest Rebellion.

BRITANNIA WRESTLED WI' THE BOER

BRITANNIA wrestled wi' the Boer,
And fairly put him under,
But ne'ertheless, as heretofore,
She'll have the boys, no wonder!
What then? Why this, we'll brethren have
Of bravest Dutch extraction,
So let again your banners wave
O'er Boer-Britannic paction.

Look! look and learn of fighting men,
Who, when the warfare ceases,
Commingle and are friends again,
As tho' their love increases
By learning of each others worth,—
Acknowledge each as bravest.
Remember thou this second birth,
While yet thy flag thou wavest.

Let non-combatants not delay
To soothe the suff'ers' sorrow,
That so our en'mies of to-day
Our friends shall be to-morrow.
Let's shut all hatred from our hearts,
T'ward mortal man or woman,
And act again a noble part
To prove our progress human.

Sing "See the conqu'ring hero comes";
Place on "Bobs'" brow the laurel;
Blow trumpets! blow! beat, beat your drums:
He conquered in our quarrel.
Yet pause and pray that Uncle Paul
May view without vexation,
Britanno-Dutch boys raise the call
For closer annexation.

June 1900.

WE'LL NE'ER GIVE UP OUR RIFLE

FRAE Africa we've just cam hame,
 See here's my walkin' ticket,
 Where we wi' Boers hae played a game
 A wee thing waur than cricket.
 But now that we the Boers hae strammed,
 We ask ye for a trifle,
 And tell ye plain we'll see ye damned
 Ere we give up our rifle.

All through the war frae morn to night
 We've closer clung than brothers,
 And now we think it scarcely right
 She e'er should be another's.
 We've hugged and kissed her all the time,
 Our love ye wadna stifle,—
 To part us would be just a crime:
 We'll ne'er give up our rifle.

1900

**TWENTIETH CENTURY! ALL, ALL ABOARD**

TWENTIETH century! all, all aboard!
 Whirled are we off, on the surest wheel known:
 Backward or forward, for devil or Lord,
 Choose we our route to the pit or the Throne.
 Solve we this problem,—for self or for others:
 Treat we our kind as our slaves or our brothers?

Teachers and Preachers and Poets this way:
 Seats are reserved for you, come in your might.
 Scorn we to humble you, grudging your pay:
 Conduct like that robs the young of their right.
 Leaders who cry "down with schoolmasters' wages"
 Echo the cry of the world's darkest ages.

Tickets, please! Show them! She's right, but you're wrong:
You should have stayed in the last century.
We protect teachers through life's busy throng:
Dare you to crush them, you'll settle with me.
Give me your satchel Ma'm, stop please your crying:
Pity the folk that are progress defying.

Savonarolas grow scarce and more scarce.
Teachers and Preachers and Poets arise
To stem the tide that is growing more fierce,
Foolish and bad, 'gainst the good and the wise:
Why should there still be the cry "Crucify Him!
Give us Barabbas to help us defy Him"?

14th January, 1901.

A PRAIRIE HERO

HUMBLER humanity follows his Queen;
Hero who suffered for years in his bed;
Hero, though never to battlefield led,
Suffered as boldly as if he had been.

Are there no heroes but those at the war?
None who die nobly who ne'er drew the sword?
Seek! You shall find, should you not take my word,
Heroes and heroines nigh to your door.

Look on the picture in yon humble room!
Patient, presenting his limb for the knife,
"Take it off Doc. though it cost me my life":
No anæsthetic for brave David Hume.

No anæsthetic! For best among all!
David Hume rested and lived on the Word;
Followed his Queen to the very same Lord;
Rested, at last, as life's load he left fall.

17th February, 1901.

VICTORIA THE GOOD**I**

Our Mithers, good souls, as soon's we could toddle,
Sowed loyalty's seed in each wee bairn's noddle;
An' aye as they tried on a wee bairn's bonnet,
Wad chant in his lug twa lines o' the sonnet,
"A cockle, a cockle on somebody's head,
"That will never come aff till the Queen be dead!"
Now aff wi' our bonnets, an' let the tear fa':
The Queen that we lo'ed sae, has slypet awa.
Right gaily for her, our glengaries we've worn;
Tak from them the thistle, let ribbons be torn;
An' never again cock them crouse on our head:
'Tis time to unbonnet, our Queen she is dead.
Or lay them awa in our private museum
For our bairns to see as they chant their Te Deum.
When they crown their King, as nae doubt they will do,
They'll "aff wi' the auld love, an' on wi' the new."

II

But "aff wi' the auld love, an' on wi' the new"
Is not to be thought of by me or by you:
Our sixty years' love fed in many a way,—
By our first hearing shouts o' "Hurray! Hurray!"
By our first sight o' fun on a Queen's birthday;
By our feeling of joy as we joined the fray;
Our pride, as our penny for fire-works was spent;
Our pain, as some big boy's experience was lent;
Our unbridled joy, as we lit our first squib;
Our conscience, new-born, as we told our first fib
About burns on our claes, an' wounds on our face,
Though loyal exploits were the facts o' the case;—
From boyhood, in short, as loyal law-breaker,
To grandsire as leal commissioned peace-maker,
Our sixty years' love fed in many a way,
By me or by you can't be changed in a day.

III

Her sixty years' love, most laborious love,
The hub of an Empire, controlled from above:
(Tyre, fellow ~~as~~ spokes of our Empire be still,
Be still as the grave, lest the grave you should fill!)
The pattern to follow, when trials were rife;
The model of meekness, for maiden and wife;
For courage, the mothers' and widows' mainstay;
For soldiers and sailors, their Queen ev'ry day;
As learned as her statesmen, for lawyers a match;
Door closed for our foes, but for friends, on the latch;
Heart-broken for heroes slain at the late war;
Heart-broken for suff'rers at home and abroad;—
Gone home to her husband, her children, and God.
No Monarch her equal for wisdom or worth.
Part we with her now, "dust to dust, earth to earth."

IV

Victoria, thy virtues were what we admired.
Thy suff'rings heroic more heroes inspired
Than armies victorious by despots oft led.
Thy goodness forever a lustre hath shed
On a vital word "Queen"; and Monarchs may bless
And revere thy dear name and suffer the less
Should they take thee as model: lay out their lives
For the good of their people; husbands and wives
Would them bless; goodness bring peace to their pillows;
Peace would prevail 'stead of war's stormy billows;
And the life of Victoria victorious live
Through the world's latest ages,—all men would give
To God the most glory, as always they should,
For grandest life story, "Victoria the Good."

16th February, 1901.

BRITANNIA RULES THE BRAVE OLD BOER

THE glorious news proclaim with song,
And shout the chorus o'er and o'er:
Most glorious news! the strain prolong,
Britannia rules the brave old Boer!

Britannia rules the brave old Boer!
They fought for freedom, she and he,
The Transvaal coloured red, the gore
Has sealed them freest of the free.

Bold men have died in freedom's cause:
Braver ne'er lived in days of yore,—
Each but upheld his country's laws.
Now make laws better than before.

Britannia's dead, the dead of Paul,
Have sealed with red, and now agree.
The living, loving, thankful fall
To Him above on bended knee:

To Him above, The Mighty Hand
That out of chaos speeds His plan,
Whose Captains rule by sea and land,
When squaring things for erring man.

The glorious news proclaim with song,
And shout the chorus o'er and o'er:
Most glorious news! the strain prolong,
Britannia rules the brave old Boer!

5th June, 1902.

WILL RITCHIE

COME boys of East Rookhurst and Lorndale the West,
We'll sing of our comrade, the boldest and best:
We'll sing of Will Ritchie, whom all of us knew
As model of manhood and type of the true.
He came from we know not: he's gone God knows where,
But where that may be, why, we want to be there.
And should we meet any his good name would slight,
We'll show them, we will sir, how Will used to fight.

Old Hogarth's apprentice did nothing at all
Compared to Will Ritchie, Spring, Summer, and Fall:
He'd fix his own farm, then rescue a neighbour;
And laugh and grow fat on the hardest of labour.
But alas, and alack! for his bairns, friends and wife,
Will has sent in his checks and departed this life.
But should we meet any his good name would slight,
We'll show them, we will sir, how Will used to fight.

1902.

CORONATION DAY

BEAUTIFUL, beautiful day for our nation,
Worthy of weather we used to call "Queen's,"
Sunnily smile at our King's coronation,
And waken a world up to learn what it means.

Sweetly swell ocean, O soft heart which binds us:
Throbs from thy bosom are felt on each shore;
Thrilling through thousands of miles thy throb finds us,
British colonials true to the core.

Ships sailing swiftly from points of creation,
Prows pointing proudly to some British port,
Carry contingents to heart of our nation,
Intent on due homage and joyful sport.

72 Operatic, Oratorical, Oratorioical Cantata !!!

Loyalty! loyalty, where shall we find it?
Surely, most surely in true British hearts:
Ancestry made, and heredity minds it;
Loyalty's praise is the highest of arts.

Monarchy moulded on beautiful limit,
Focusing all that is lawful and right:
National greatness personified! hymn it,
Hymn it as worthy to live in the light.

Patriots praying for peace on our borders,
Patriots praying for war without end,
Patriots patient, awaiting King's orders
Some country to conquer or his to defend,

Patriots! patriots all alike loyal,
Loyally, lovingly, laughingly sing
God save each country, Republic or Royal,
God save the people, and God Save the King.

24th June, 1902.



OPERATIC, ORATORICAL, ORATORIOICAL CANTATA !!!

Composed for the occasion, conducted by the author, and performed before an appreciative audience of Rookhurst Grain Growers and friends at their first social held in Rookhurst School House, 5th June, 1906.

***KORUS OF KIDS:**

Thou God didst truly give
This land in which we live,
With this command:
"Honour thy father bold,
Honour thy mother old,
Then firmly have and hold,
And rule this land."

Solo:

A mother's work is never done:
From rising to the set of sun
She's ever, always on the run,
 For loyalty's her creed.
So up she rises, makes the bed
Where bonnie bairns were born and bred,
And pond'ring how they're to be fed
 Just to improve the breed.

She hurries down, the fire is lit,
The breakfast made, so down they sit.
The grace is said, as is most fit,
 Before the feast begins:
And more abundant goodness sought,
And thanks is gien for good things got,
For miracles of mercy wrought,
 The pardon of all sins.

With pork and porridge satisfied,
Industrious lads now step outside,
And hitch their horses up wi' pride
 To seeder, plow or disc:
While mother whips the dishes up,
Nor breaks a plate, nor bowl, nor cup,
And feeds the cat and then the pup,
 Then deftly plies the whisk.

The house at length in order good,
As houses after breakfast should,
The dinner hour will call for food
 The mindful mother knows:
But wood and water has to get,
And gather eggs that should be set,
But whispers softly "nests to let,"
 As biddy cackling goes.

For wheaten bread, the staff of life,
And pride of each Canadian wife,
She briskly bares her arm for strife,
 To mix, to punch, to drum:
Lo! see it forming sure but slow,
From milky sponge to toughish dough,
And firmer, smoother, rounder grow,
 Like ony bonnie bum.

But why prolong the agony?
We all have eyes, and all can see,
That mother never can get free
 Her curious case to plead:
For mother's work is never done,
From rising to the set of sun
She's ever, always on the run,
 For loyalty's her creed.

KORUS OF KIDS:

Grain Growers they can mind themselves,
Can mind themselves, can mind themselves,
Grain Growers they can mind themselves,
 And hold their big conventions:
But mothers, they must stay at home,
Must stay at home, must stay at home,
But mothers they must stay at home
 Or there would be contentions.

Solo:

Be this the moral of our rhyme,
The M.G.G. should haste the time
When mother's mission, most sublime,
 Shall be right understood;
And means matured to ease the work
Of baking bread, of curing pork,
Of making, mending, washing socks,
For all her boys and other folks,
Of scrubbing, scouring duds and floors,
Of sewing, churning: all indoors,
 For scant reward, her food.

Be this the moral of our rhyme:
Get mothers outside half the time,
And not look old when in their prime
And pride of mother-hood.

KORUS:

Manitoba! for thee they crossed the waves:
Now see that mothers never, never
Shall be slaves.

SOLO:

The Chinese at our beck and call,
(VOICE FROM AUDIENCE):
"Me bling puppy doggie pie."

SOLO RESUMED:

The Chinese at our beck and call,
Be this the maxim of us all:
A Chinaman we'll have this Fall
To laundry, clean and cook.
The threshermen may all go hang,
Should they object to Li Hung Chang:
Outside the door their †turkeys bang
To cook on their own hook.

In other words: we'll all work hard
To do or die wi' Rookhurst Bard
For those we hold in such regard,
Man's better half indeed.
For mother's work is never done,
From rising to the set of sun
She's ever, always on the run,
For loyalty's her creed.

KORUS:

God give us useful lives,
Cheerful and kindly lives,
And save us all.
May we be parents too,
Paddling our own canoe,
As folk have had to do,
Since that old "fall."

* "Korus"—the new spelling!

† "Turkeys"—the knapsacks of the threshermen.

**SOUVENIR FOOT-BALL SONG**

*From Minnedosa F.B.C. to Calgary F.B.C., 27th September,
1906, written for occasion.*

(TUNE: *Bonnie Dundee*)

HE who flouts at Foot-ballers
Flings filth at the King;
Is a traitor to country,
To kith and to kin;
He's a coward at heart,
But he must understand
That the foot-ball's himself
Proxy-punished forehand.
Then toss him up higher,
And off with his head.
He's a base-born decrier:
Make goal posts his bed,
And when he is in
Let us give our loud yell,
Then Da Capo Ad Lib,
Kicking low, aiming well.

"To make peace the more perfect
Prepare ye for war"
Is an adage of wisdom,
We've heard of before.
So in finest field-practice
Foot-ballers engage,
And in worthiest war-fare
Ambitions assuage:
One side now defeated,
Both sides friends for life.
The victors, still heated,
Bring sweethearts to wife,
And accepting the homage
That comes with renown,
Waving high their proud plumage
Bring trophy to town.



WRITTEN FOR BANQUET

Held in Minnedosa in honor of Calgary F.B.C.

O THE time is now come
To look solemn and glum,
If we're able.
Tho' it's not for defeat,
For the game was a treat,
Like this table.
Yet the thing that's begun
Is most always half done,
Like this banquet:
And the evident fact
That we can't be more pact
'Sthe wet blanket.

Let it never be said
That our meeting has bred
An ill feeling.

By the heavens above
There is nothing but love
 'Neath this ceiling.
For we play the grand game
That is worthy the name,
 Whoe'er loses:
Tho' we needna deny
That the thing was too dry,—
 No bled noses.

For those to be sorry,
Who've gotten the glory,
 No thank you:
And should you who have lost
Say "We'll give up the ghost,"
 Why, we'll spank you.
For the gist o' the matter,
Like this soda water,
 Won't bevel:
And the only way out o't,
We have got nae doubt o't,
 'Sto get level.

So to our next meeting
Our thrapples we're weeting
 Wi' pleasure.
Yet should we ne'er happen
Again to be scrappin',
 We'll treasure
The mem'ry o' this fight,
The mem'ry o' this night,
 For ever.
Yes, your ball you can bet it,
We'll never forget it,
 No, never.

27th September, 1906.

**ENDORSEMENT ON PHOTOGRAPH OF
THE AUTHOR IN DANCING POSTURE**

Dedicated, and in reply, to my dear friend James Cadenhead of Glasgow, Scotland, whose invitation "to dance at the wedding" of his daughter Selina, on 4th September, 1906, is just to hand, and which can only be met in this manner, that is, by these my lines, and photograph entitled, "Poetry, Music and the Dance, Rejoicing with the Bride."

In modern days the Dance is damned,
Which almost makes me swear;
And Music too, they say is crammed
Wi' trills we shouldna hear.
And as for Poetry! how absurd,
They say 'tis never read:
For why? "the Bard is born," my word;
They also say "he's dead."

This trinity so much abused,
When first I had your call,
Like one demented I had used
Till I was like to fall.
The Glorious Three in One, askance
Find on the other side,
As Poetry, Music and the Dance
Rejoicing with the Bride.

13th August, 1906.



MARY GRAHAM

To ev'ry maid her meed of praise,
If possible, when living;
To ev'ry maid her meed of praise,—
All, more or less, are radiant rays
That, pow'rful, pierce the darkling days
Existence may be giving.

A burning, as a shining, light,
The subject of our off'ring;
A burning, as a shining, light,
Her soul, like flick'ring flame, took flight
To realm above, which knows no night,
To God, her service proff'ring.

"Abide with me," her favourite song,
Sung earnestly, confiding;
"Abide with me," her favourite song,
Re-echoes from th' immortal throng,
And welcomes Mary Graham among
The saints, with Him abiding.

17th October, 1906.



SAINT ANDREW'S DAY

SAINT Andrew's Day, and here we are,
But not for dissipation:
The chiels are met frae near and far
To gather inspiration;
Beneath Saint Andrew's cross to pledge
Their love and deep devotion
To Scotland on the distant edge
Of broad Atlantic Ocean.

As by her thistle's prickly spikes
Auld Scotland ance was saved, man;
As by her sons wi' spears and pikes
Her enemies were braved, man;
As by the lore on Jacob's stone
King Edward first had shunted,
A Scotch King reigned on English throne
And Englishmen affronted;

As by her dochter's cutty stool
 Religion was made free, man;
 As by a parliament'ry rule
 Great Britain stands for three, man;
 As by auld Scotland's grand auld men
 The world has been made better;—
 We vow to view her now and then,
 And never to forget her.

'Tis this that kindles kindred souls
 Whatever be their station:
 But mony a cannie Scotchman tholes
 The annual oration.
 Sic patience purges puny strife
 Between the dumb and talkers:
 And each gangs hame to kiss his wife,
 Or cuddle for wee jokers.

For St. Andrew's Day.
 9th November, 1906.



TOAST

OH we're a' far awa frae the land o' our birth,
 But we'll ne'er forget her hills, her vales, her streams:
 Though in sorrow we bow, or sing around the hearth,
 Like a flash we're there, or waukin' or in dreams.
 To the land o' cakes and heather,
 To the land o' Burns and Scott,
 Where her sons are met together
 She shall never be forgot.

MARIE VIOLET

LA lov'd Petite Marie
We were happy to see:
And we love her all 'round,
From the Mater to me.
We compare her to none
But the stars, moon and sun:
And the sweet Violet
Brings love "down to the ground."
None will ever forget.

5th December, 1906.

**FRIENDLY FLOSS, TO THEE ADIEU****PRELUDE**

To ev'ry maid her meed of praise,
If possible when living;
To ev'ry maid her meed of praise,—
All, more or less, are radiant rays
That, pow'rful, pierce the darkling days
Experience may be giving.

CHORUS:

Friendly Floss to thee adieu!
May your holiday bring health:
Health and happiness to you
Meaneth more than worldly wealth.

SOLO:

Lorndale lasses, all so nice,
Love their leading organist.
She, they say, should surely splice,
Then she would not so be missed.

Lorndale lads more numerous
Cannot all have such a prize:
So, content, and humorous,
Meet, and eat dear Flossie's pies.

For the fairies have made Floss
Fine and fearless at the stove;
And herein their greatest loss,
That they all her cooking love.

Cheerful living's Flossie's forte;
Cheerfully her life is spent;
Cheerfully may she consort,
When a cheerful husband's sent.

CHORUS:

Friendly Floss to thee adieu!
May your holiday bring health:
Health and happiness to you
Meaneth more than worldly wealth.

3rd March, 1907.

***JUMBO, THE OLD WHITE MULE**

*To John Beddome, Esq., Salmon Arm, B.C., Canada, in
answer to his request for "A poem on the
old white mule."*

PAUSE, please, if peacefully inclined.
Compose thy soul, and eke compose thy mind.
If need be, fill thy pipe, complacent pull
And puff away until thy rest be full.
Then, as the circling, offer-rings ascend,
Enframe in fancy thy four-footed friend,
E'en though our art should break the artist's rule
And leave outside the ears of that old mule.

Yes friend, we bought the poor old beast,
Not thinking he'd refuse each proffered feast.
Not that he would not, sometimes, nibble hay,
But aye he'd stop, and gaze, and seemed to say:
"Stranger, I thank you, but you're not my John,
For him I lived, him would I feast upon:
But now, alas, he's borne to far B.C.,
I born B.C., for him lie 'down an' 'die',"

But John, 'tis best it should be so;
Nor weep, that your old servant had to go:
Such love, as shewn by beasts, is for our good,
And teaches us to love them as we should.
Old Jumbo dead, dead as the curst-cross-nail,
Just say the word, I'll send you his old tail.
But hark! what's that? the wolves' unearthly howl,
Alack! alas! amen, why need we growl.

(Selah.)

Jumbo, thy name provokes a smile;
Thy fame invites another:
We're told, by him who knows no guile,
You loved him like a brother.

Are mules more treacherous than men?
Are only men immortal?
Shall John and Jumbo meet again
And pass the heav'nly portal?

When man and beast their race hath run,
Shall He, The Great Observant,
Mean only man, by His "Well done
Thou good and faithful servant"?

A hope, a lively hope have we,
That then, the trumpet sounding,
All things that liv'd and lov'd we'll see
For their reward come bounding.

Then John, beside his bonnie bride,
On faithful Jumbo riding,
Down golden streets will safely glide,
And ask where I'm residing.

23rd March, 1907.

* "Jumbo" was a white mule owned by John Beddome for a longer time than any youth in the neighbourhood could remember. On Mr. Beddome's leaving Hazelwood School District for British Columbia he donated his mule to one of Mr. Thomson's sons. At his new place of abode Jumbo refused to eat, and soon departed this life.

†"Die"—in Scottish pronounced dee.

POST CARD

*Calling Meeting of Rookhurst Branch of Manitoba Grain
Growers' Association.*

At our annual meeting
We'll all be heard bleating,
For surely we're shaven and shorn;
We're fleeced and we're flayed,
And our debts can't be paid
Until fairness in trade be reborn.

R. B. THOMSON,
Sec.-Treas.

Where? At school house;
When? Second Saturday, 14th Dec., 1907;
What? Renew: Elect: Audit.

THE FALL

Lo! on the ground
The leaves lie all unburied.
Glory they gave
While dying hues were theirs.
Coldness all 'round,
To mother earth they hurried:
Mother will save

The souls of all she bears.
Leaves that now have lost their glory
And once defied the bravest breeze,
Though carpeting the woods so hoary
Will rise again to clothe the trees.

Fall of 1907.

**LINES**

to Mr. and Mrs. John Beddome, Waverly, Ontario.

"Good Shepherd"-like, your kindly greeting
Affects me more than words can tell:
As if you'd heard my lamb-like bleating,
And rang for me your Christmas bell.
For I'm, alas! in pastures barren,
A stranger, I, in Winnipeg
Where rustlings, as in rabbit warren,
Assail my lug and urge my leg.
But why regretful thoughts obtruding?
"He" is with us, what need we fear?
So now we'll to our Christmas pudding,
And wish J.B. a Guid New Year.

25th December, 1908.

A FARMERS' UNION

*Written after persuing an article on that subject
by Mr. E. A. Partridge.*

RAISE the banner on high, of our Union!
Shew the sheaf with the true balanced scales,
And the motto for social communion:
'Tis "In Union is Strength" that prevails.

Eighty thousand farmers on the march:
Tremble ye few hundred men of starch.
The day is past and gone,
When each farmer stood alone,
To be scorned and overthrown
By the arch.

20th December 1907.

LINES

*Written on a post card calling annual meeting of Rookhurst
Branch of Manitoba Grain Growers' Association.*

STICK me up and watch me close:
Absentees may suffer loss.
Delegates you must select;
Officers of worth elect.
Do not shirk but always strive
G.G.A. to keep alive.
For why? No doubt a cause is lost
When membership gives up the ghost.

R. B. THOMSON,
Secretary-Treasurer.

December 1908.

HECTOR McDONALD

OH glorious McDonald, thy fame shall ne'er perish:
Thy deeds of brave daring are known to thy kindred;
Through Highlands and Lowlands all Scotchmen shall
cherish
The name of the one with the soul of "six hundred."
Hector McDonald! Thou'rt high in our heart's esteem!
Soars thy proud soul o'er thine own native mountain?
Hector McDonald, as darteth that mountain stream,
So thy traducers to hell's flaming fountain.

1908.



THE PARTING KISS

A kiss lies on my withered cheek to-night,
Unlike impassioned kiss of pure delight,
But cool, refreshing, and it says to me:
Farewell dear friend, a long farewell to thee.
My grateful tears have fertilized that spot,
And lo! the flow'r of love, Forget-me-not.

Last night as friends their presentations made,
Much, much impressed was I by words they said,
But this cool kiss, and yon confiding look,
Were like the vow and kiss on Holy Book.
Thy parting kiss my withered cheek shall feel,
Till kind, cool kiss of death my lips shall seal.

10th November, 1908.

Friends of Mr. Thomson, in Rookhurst, made a presentation to him before his leaving the district to reside in Winnipeg.

"ENGLISH" THIS AND "ENGLISH" THAT

"ENGLISH" this and "English" that,
Kills the Scot and rouses Pat,
Ignores the Welshman a'thegither,
And puts the three in quite a swither,
Whether,—when they mean to squat,—
They'll go where they'll aye be quat
O' "English" this and "English" that.



A VISION

In Central Congregational Church.

THE organ, harp and violin
Seemed incomplete to me,
And so a scene was ushered in,
Which no one else could see.

The organ, harp and violin
Had breathed a wondrous chord,
When lo! a phantom field was seen,
And vision of our Lord.

Then organ, harp and violin
Held me in deeper trance,
And forms in flowing robes were seen,
Engaged in rhythmic dance.

Dance, organ, harp and violin
Had His approving smile,—
The guerdon all would wish to win,
That praise Him without guile.

The music ceased, the view dissolved,
And 'woke me from my dream,
But left me then, as now, resolved
Not to forget the theme.

28th September, 1909.

REV. DR. MCKINNON LEAVES WINNIPEG

HE was "the real Mackay";
He is the real Mackinnon;
Whose earnest prayer and cry
Would keep auld Nick frae sinnin':
But now he's gone to fields anew,
And bade farewell to me and you.

1909.

**QUESTION**

*Asked by Mr. Callendar on visiting Winnipeg in 1909:
"What's the meaning of Boy Fount at City Hall,
Winnipeg?" (Answered by the Boy Fount).*

ONE boot off, and one boot on,
A water hole and a heap of stone,
An ornamental fount near by
That canna stroan as hich as I.

**TOAST TO A NEWLY WEDDED COUPLE**

OUR friens hae loved, hae loved an' won,
An' now their warldly fecht's begun.
May a' the joy o' life be theirs,
Wi' few, if ony, cank'rin' cares.

WINNIPEG BOYS' CLUB FIELD DAY

OUR boys they had a fine field day.
They were a splendid bunch,
And shewed how easily that they
Their enemies would crunch.
Onlookers all enjoyed the sport,
The judges saw fair play,
And pluck, and stuff would hold the fort
If girls would watch and pray.

28th September, 1909.

Written at the request of J. B. Anderson, Superintendent W.B.C.

ADVICE TO AMELIA

Before Marriage.

NEVER to scold,
Often to kiss;
Cannot grow old
Living like this.
Feeding for love,
Not to make fat,
True treasure trove
Wifie like that.

INSULTING THE INDIAN

Written after hearing jeers and mockery, gobbler-like sounds, proceeding from a troop of cavalry, and evidently levelled at three Indians (man, woman and child) whom I afterwards saw entering St. Boniface Hospital.

HATH chivalry departed from our race?
Hath discipline while under arms departed?
Hath Canada declined to hold in place
A high esteem for ancient foes down-hearted?

Why not, in self respect, give the salute,
And quit ourselves like man and not like ass
That kicks and brays and bites? Why act the brute
When acting otherwise would suit our class?

A noble song you sang,—'twas "John Brown's Body":
Why, why not understand that song of peace?
Or was your singing-sentiment but shoddy,
That sight of Red man's wife should make you cease
And join the bubbly-jock of your good corps,
To soil the laurels won, and so much prized,
When fighting with the foe, now friendly Boer,
As Red man is, if only realized?

1909.



GRACE SCOTT

GRACE gone from Rookhurst! hear us Father! Lord!
Grace from our district, we can least afford.
Send thou with int'rest back, turn not thy face,
Nor take without repaying Grace for Grace.
Cull not our flow'rets, leave us not to mourn
Without some rich solatium in return.
Souls harrowed here with grief, still Thou prepare
To follow slips transplanted "Over there."

1909.



MY WIFE

My wife has been the happiest
Of all the wives I know.
In ripe old age the sappiest,
Her cheeks like peaches glow.
Her eyes so bright and glorious
As when they first met mine
Have led through life victorious
Each branch of my fruitful vine.

This land was strange and curious
In eighteen eighty-four;
But things that made me furious,
Thank God, are now no more.
And through life's university
My wife would soothe my wrath
'Till now no dire adversity
Is feared in our homeward path.

Good books read with avidity
Have been her rest through life.
Aye free from curst cupidity,
She's been my faithful wife,
A model of maternity,
Her children love her so.
As here so through eternity
United we shall go.

Now this, her Robin's rhyming,
He'll ask her to endorse:
His building needs her priming
To give its fairness force.
Hurrah! I've seen her signing,
We've sealed it with a kiss:
Our faces, both, are shining,
And shameless is our bliss.

September 1909.

CANADA'S MESSAGE TO GREAT BRITAIN

On Death of King Edward VII.

THOUGH our outlook be clouded by purple and black,
Far beyond we can still see the red, white and blue;
And the wheels of our Empire are still on the track,
And there's joy in the future for me and for you.

Though our King's life's been shortened, to him a relief,—
Already three cheers for our King have been giv'n;

And his mandate gone forth as to temper our grief,
That our royal salute shook the earth and reached heav'n:

While the message sent forth from the brink of the grave
Tells of faith that Britannia shall still rule the wave,
Nor the King nor the people each other enslave,
But both loyally labour an Empire to save.

Shall the story of Edward, as true Mother's son,
Not strengthen belief that his son is all right?
Shall the proof of Victorian virtues, begun,
Not be held as an omen and hailed with delight?

As witness already his earnest request
That amusements and trade be resumed as before,
So that labour and loyalty still shall be blest,
Nor have cause to repent while their hearts are still sore.

Farewell gallant Edward, thy soul be at rest,
While thy son and his subjects in wisdom increase,
And together at bloodshed and war make protest,
And aye proffer to nations thy programme of peace.

12th May, 1910.



WINNIPEG MOURNS EDWARD VII

WINNIPEG mourns!
Her sighs and her groans
Are seen but not heard,
On her pillars and posts,
And her people in silence
Are gath'ring in hosts
To the last solemn service,
Their tribute to bring
To him whom they loved
E'en the world's greatest King.

Winnipeg mourns!

Her works and her workers three minutes stand still.
They bethink them of how kingly labour can kill,
And how labour personified lay in the grave,
And how, correctly saying, he laboured to save.

Winnipeg mourns!

No longer suppressed,
Her sighs and her groans
Issue forth from the breast
Of her guns and her drums
And their thunders appal
And the Dead March in Saul
Awe-inspiring as ever
From the blare of the Barrowclough band meets the quiver
Of sorrowing souls
As the chorus outrolls
Hallelujah! Be glory to God the good giver.

Winnipeg mourns!

Her duty half done,
She turns her eyes Eastward
To see a King's son
Whose face wears a frown:
There are thorns in his Crown
He would fain have removed
Ere he's led to the throne.

Winnipeg sings:

King Edward kept pace with his subjects I ween:
King George is some paces ahead it is seen.
Our King would love all and has projects ahead,
And his subjects, if "forward," would love to be led.

Winnipeg,
20th May, 1910.

CORONATION LUCUBRATION

Oh loyalty's a glorious thing,—
Mark loyalty of mothers,
Who loyally the children bring
Then marry them to others.
And loyalty of church and state
'Tis wonderful to see it.
Such loyalty's designed by fate:
The unseen pow'r did give it.

But loyalty most wonderful
Is loyalty of princes.
While to their health we take a pull,
E'en then our conscience winces:
But those we think of pass away,
The one we have is better,
And love is kin to loyalty,
And binds it like a fetter.

Though kings, a few, have not retired,—
Like modern men's invention,
Whose patent rights have all expired,—
It may be God's intention
That one good king should reign on earth,
As one's enough in heaven,
And gives our King the glorious berth,
The highest prize that's given.

For he will take the solemn oath,
By Parliament amended,
For he'll be leal to churches both,
And none will be offended.
Therefore the matter endeth here:
His loyalty to usward,
Of that we'll nothing have to fear,
Nor either use the hardword.

So when the happy day comes 'round,
And loyalty's applauded,
Let reciprocity abound,
And no one be defrauded:

For loyalty's a glorious thing,
And when it's universal,
We all may play at jingo ring,
Nor dream of a reversal.

Approach ye coronation day!
Let George the Fifth be crowned:
To him our loyal tribute pay;
In fun let fear be drowned.
Retain the song we often sing.
Why needs it be expunged?
Oh proudly sing, God Save The King,
Nor in dire doubt be plunged.

1911.

CHRISTMAS 1911

*To Mrs. George Fisher, acknowledging receipt of a fine
pot of flowers for Mrs. Thomson.*

PART hidden by the bonnie fern,
Begonia's pinkish blossoms glow;
While glowing eyes the lessons learn,
That love and friendship from them flow.
And flow'rs they teach
And, silent, preach
Their sermon on this Christmastide:
They say that love
Is from above,—
That Christ was love personified.

Can Mother's message be expressed?
Ethereal realty though it be.
Ah no, our weakness be confessed:
Not yet can we be dubbed D.D.!
But all the same,
We're not to blame,
And dare aver this Christmastide:
The flow'r of love,
That's from above,
Like Christ, is love personified.

PYROGRAPHY! A NEW YEAR'S BLETHER

*Lines acknowledging receipt of a Picture Frame artistically
decorated by laborious poker work, from Mr. and Mrs.
Hunter to Mrs. Thomson, Christmas morning, 1911.*

WHEN this old world was formed and framed,
And our first parents duly named,
And years had passed since they were blamed
 For robbing tree of knowledge;
When exigencies of the case
Impelled to multiply the race,
The lower animals to face,
 They'd neither school nor college:
But calmly set about the work,
The fertile earth to delve and fork,
And welcome gave to ev'ry stork
 That helpit immigration;
And fruit and fowl and flesh and fish
Gave each and all a dainty dish
 And gratified each pray'r and wish
 Of founders of our nation.
Their Fishers guddled in the burns;
Their Hunters set the cunning gurns.
As each well loaded man returns
 Their dance aye shewed their gladness.
Their rhythmic dance led up to song:
The Bard was recognized ere long,
Who praised the right and damned the wrong,
 In times of joy or sadness.

Selah.

What means this vapid rigmarole
That leaves in ev'ry line a hole,
That's hard to read and hard to thole
 By ony reader?
Why! Why this feast of drivel dole
 To honest feeder?
Just this: 'tis but a picture frame
That you can burn when you get hame,—

Not in the fire! For shame, for shame
Ye sinner hoary,—
I mean fill in wi' fire and flame
Frae Bible story.

For instance and likewise for fun,
Just think of Esau wi' a gun,
And how his brother would hae run
For want o' courage;
But then, what Hunter could hae done
Without his porridge?
Again you'll mind how Israel's Bard,
For dancing Hielan fling sae hard,
Had lost ane o' his wives' regard,
Wha liv'd to rue it.
Why, why should she his dance retard?
I'd fain construe it.

Selah.

The Hunter and the Bard burnt in,
I hope such work is no a sin,
But if it be, I'm just the ane
To put my name on't:
The scape-goat may get up an' rin,
I'll ne'er lay blame on't.
Come down the burn to Galilee,
And Fisher folk we'll aiblins see,
And ane sae dear to you and me,
The Saviour of the world,
Whose birthdays, held from sea to sea,
The Universe impearled.
Whom saw He there, what did He say
On yon, the first St. Andrew's day?
Peter and Andrew what did they
But follow as he bade?
'Twas thus the Fisher folk were raised
To fish for men, the Lord be praised,
For I was caught when nearly dazed,
And that has made me glad.

I'm nearly done wi' this, so there!
 Gin ye've a corner yet to spare,
 'Twould be a shame to leave't so bare.
 Put in three merry boys:
 There's douce G.F. and you, and me,
 Wha often meet, and aye agree
 That there's nae better trinitie
 Deserving Christmas joys!
 Here's to the Fishers, every one,
 Here's to the Hunters and their son,
 Here's to mysel'! I'm done! I'm done!
 Wi' New Year's blether.
 Gin my poor frame still shews bare grun',
 Fill't in wi' heather.



THE SILVER WEDDING

*Lines written for the Silver Wedding Celebration of my
 good friends Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Hunter of Winnipeg,
 16th February, 1912.*

Prelude, or Hop, Step and Loup.

WHEN Adam and his better half
 Resolved to hold their silver wedding,
 Eve polished up her silv'ry laugh,
 And gathered silver saughs for bedding.

Their sons had to be warned in time,
 For they had gone some miles homesteading;
 But Adam still was in his prime,
 And soon the trodden trail was treading.

Meantime dear Eve in joyful mood
 Awoke the echoes with her singing,
 And silver spangled poultry stood,
 And heard her silv'ry voice outringing.

EVE'S SONG

TUNE: Whistle Ower the Lave O't.

"ADAM was the only man;
I'd a waist that he could span:
When he kissed me off I ran
 But faster flew my Adam.
I was married, that's a fact;
Courting was a joyful act:
Now we maun renew the pact
 That made him ca' me Madam."

Adam, although he heard the voice,
Could not just at the time rejoice,
For he was conjuring with what
This silver wedding might be fraught.
But later as he trudged alang,
Sung to himsel' this wee bit sang:—

"I love my lassie, my bonnie, sweet wee lassie:
She's the finest on the yirth, truth to tell;
She's gentler than the bunny, and sweeter than the honey,
My Eve, the only belle!"

He sang, the birdies held their whisht;
He sang, his throat had been weel creesht;
He sang, his cruel sons unleashed
 Their hounds upon him;
He sang, he sang again and scrieded
 His shame upon 'em.
Returning home he changed his key
And sang this song in lower G.

ADAM'S SONG

TUNE: Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep.

"THE silver lining of the clouds
Portend an end to human feuds:
But silver-fox hounds thrown on me
Affirm man's inhumanity.
The inconsistencies of life

Bring grief to children, man and wife.
 Oh Thou who mad'st the clouds we see,
 Make home-made clouds more silverie;
 Oh Thou who mad'st the clouds we see,
 Make home-made clouds more silverie."

This prelude, or hop, step and loup,
 (I fear I've landed on my doup),
 Comes to an end as we shall see,
 Beneath a spreading chestnut tree
 Where all the Adamses on earth,
 Enjoying, saw this scene, with mirth:
 The two auld folk in silv'ry stream,
 I wondered aye if Eve wad scream,
 But no, they, loving, laved their hands,
 And tied themselves with silv'ry bands,
 And vowed for ever to be true,
 As silver wedded folk should do.

Just then a splash of the city cream
 Awoke me from my silvery dream.
 And, after I'd got ower my swither,
 I'd breakfast in my bed wi' Mither.

End of prelude.

PART II

To jump the gap from Adam's time
 Wad try a jumper in his prime;
 But here you see I've sprachled up
 To gie auld Pegasus the whup.
 We turn our eyes to blushing bride
 And honest man she stands beside.

This is th' exceptionable time

When flattery is not a crime:

Say, have you seen a bonnier pair?
 Say, have you seen a bonnier pair
 Since I and mine were standing there?
 What are ye laughing at? It's true:

I challenge baith o' ye the now.
Step on the scales, I carena where,
Ye'll baith gang fleein' in the air,
While I an' mine wi' smilin' face
Will bang down to the ither place!
Oh, weel, we maunna mak a iuss:
Comparisons are odious.—
But look again at newly wed
Before ye send them aff to bed.
Oh, pardon me, why speak of bedding,
When this is purer, silver-wedding.
For, five and twenty years have gane,
In which to sift life's golden grain;
In which to burn up all the gross,
And save life's silver from life's dross.
And silver wedding has a meaning,
At least my mind is that way leaning.
For, tak the first with its caressings;
Then tak the fifth, there's two—three blessings;
And wooden ware is very handy,
When Tamas, he, has taen to brandy.
The tenth year sune comes whirlin' in,
And finds the table spread wi' tin.
The fifteenth comes and weans are helpin',
And Tam scarce needs sae muckle skelpin',
Yet maun hae toddy in a tumbler,
But may be talks a wee thing humbler.
The twentieth comes and lo! the china,
A present to her Ma from Dinah.
And when the silver wedding comes,
Grand Daddy Tamas haws and hums
And kisses his grand-daughter Kate,
Wha puts a nickle in his plate,—
 Too bad to give myself away,
 But let us blame heredity.

Reverting to this present case,
'Tis nice to see a pleasant face,
Whose wedded life hath purified,
And pessimists have all defied

Who say that nae to marry's right,
And glory in their candle light.

Song

Celebrate this Silver Wedding,
Rally 'round this happy, happy pair,
Emblems of their joy outspreading,
Symbols of the joy we share.
Silv'ry thrills are through them moving,
Silv'ry trills now rend the air;
Silv'ry thoughts of ours, approving;
Silv'ry life, and time to spare.

The subject's long, and broad, and spreading:
We'll finish't at your Golden Wedding.

16th February, 1912.



THE HUNTERS' SILVER WADDIN' O

THE Scotch are Scotch, a' folk should ken,
Made up o' women and o' men,
And when they pair, like cock and hen,
They gang and hae a waddin' O.
Some five and twenty years ago
A braw young couple acted so,
And just yestreen, as ye maun know,
They held their silver waddin' O.

A' maistly Lanark folk were there,
But ev'ry shire had sent its share,
And ev'ry ane brought silver ware
To Hunters' silver waddin' O.
Congratulations were fu' rife:
There hadna been sic man and wife.
Of that we a' could stake our life
At Hunters' silver waddin' O.

The ae objection broke the rule:
'Twas made by yon auld Glesca fool,
Wha's wife had used the cutty stool,
And spoiled his head wi' daudin' O.
George Fisher sune was on his fit;
He cowp't the Keely wi' his wit,
An' han'l't him without a mitt
At Hunters' silver waddin' O.

The bridegroom made a big mistake
When cuttin' up the braw bride cake:
To silver knife (he didna take)
He wadna be behaudin' O.
A common table knife, he's ta'en,
Which means, he maun begin again
To "cut up" for anither ane
To hansel Golden Waddin' O.
17th February, 1912.



ST. VALENTINE'S DAY 1910

To My Wife.

FOR forty years we've loved, my love,
And aye our love grows stronger.
Please Providence, we hope to prove
We'll love a wee while longer:
And as we view this Valentine,
Love stories fresh as ever,
With love divine our love will twine,
And never, never sever.

"Love Stories":—Having failed to find an appropriate Valentine in the stores, I came across the Bible Society Store, bought a bible with large type, and wrote the above lines on it.—R.B.T

ST. VALENTINE'S DAY 1912*To My Wife.*

A LOVERS' quarr'l we never had
Before that we were won and wed:
And joyful, as when lass and lad,
Our married life hath quickly sped.

The secret of our wedded bliss,
With fervent wish, we leave behin':
'Tis: "slow to wrath," but quick to kiss,
And annual vow as Valentine.

Had we to live our lives again,
With knowledge of this life's routine,
I'd gladly say Amen! Amen!
With you as my dear Valentine.

LETTER

*To James Brackenridge, Christchurch, New Zealand,
19th February, 1912.*

DEAR Sir, I mean Dear Brackenridge,
A continent and seas we'll bridge
Wi' tracery that wad shame a midge
Wi' inky feet,
Yet tricklin' through't a thought may trudge
A frien to greet.

Your sister and your brother-in-law
Nae langer than yestreen I saw,
An' syne before they gaed awa
I spiered your name.
I kenna how to spell't ava,
Am I to blame?

Your kindly words she tell'd to me,
And I in reciprocitie
Haud out my haun across the sea
And grasp your ain.
May you and yours aye happy be,
Amain! Amain!



SONGS OF WELCOME TO SCOTCH CURLERS

*Come bare your Pow and make your Bow to
Winsome Winnipeg.*

(a) INVITATION

TUNE: *Auld Langsyne.*

ON sport intent and pleasure bent
You chiels hae crossed the sea;
Come further ben to our fire-en',
An' we shall happy be;
An' we shall happy be my friens,
An' we shall happy be;

Come further ben to our fire-en',
 An' we shall happy be.

This is leap year, and you are here,
 An' so your love we beg:
 Come bare your pow and mak your bow
 To winsome Winnipeg;
 To winsome Winnipeg my friens,
 To winsome Winnipeg;
 Come bare your pow an' mak your bow
 To winsome Winnipeg.

You're welcome wi' our boys to play,
 You're welcome to our brooms;
 An' win or lose, when at the close
 We'll dance an' crack our thumbs.
 We'll dance an' crack our thumbs my friens,
 We'll dance an' crack our thumbs;
 An' win or lose, when at the close
 We'll dance an' crack our thumbs.

(b) PREPARATION

The Curlers Are Comin'.

TUNE: "The Campbells Are Comin'!"

THE Curlers are comin', hurrah! hurrah!
 The Curlers are comin', hurrah! hurrah!
 The Curlers are comin'
 We'll hear their stanes bummin':
 We hear their trains hummin', hurrah! hurrah!
 They come frae auld Scotland, hurrah! hurrah!
 Frae bonnie auld Scotland, hurrah! hurrah!
 The driver's steam throtlin',
 Our throats we're unbottlin'
 To cheer for auld Scotland, hurrah! hurrah!

The bagpipes are skirlin', hurrah! hurrah!
 The flags we're unfurlin', hurrah! hurrah!

The autos are whirlin'
To gie ye a hurl in.
Their whistles are burlin,' hurrah! hurrah!
Tak tent to your bonnets, hurrah! hurrah!
Your red tooried bonnets, hurrah! hurrah!
"Though it's no just your bonnet
But the head that is in it,"
Let sportin' ne'er spin it, hurrah! hurrah!

(c) HERE AT LAST

TUNE. "*Whistle Ower the Lave O't.*"

COME awa you're here at last,
Sit ye down and break your fast,
Nail your colours to the mast
An' whistle o'er the lave o't.
Curlin' stanes our Fathers threw,
Ringlets curled our Mithers' brow,
Curl your pinkies, here's to you,
An' whistle o'er the lave o't.

Drive!—dull care frae aff your brain,
Draw!—let frienship ever reign,
Guard!—remember wife and wean
An' whistle o'er the lave o't.
Curl your elbow into mine:
Twas an' twas we'll toe the line.
March! the curlin' game's divine
An' whistle o'er the lave o't.

LINES

*To William Brown and Andrew Mitchell, Scottish Curlers,
Crossmyloof Contingent, staying at Royal
Alexandra Hotel, Winnipeg.*

CROSSMYLOOF

THE exile from his native hame
Aft turns to it a longing e'e,
And ae wee spot is aye the aim,
The place of his nativitie.

Thus "Crossmyloof" hath stirred my soul
As it hath not been stirred for years:
Like lightning's flash and thunder's roll
The mem'ry of my past appears.

I see my Grannie in her chair,
My Grandfather sits by her side;
My Uncle and my Auntie there
Received me aye with joy and pride.

There my poor Dad returned to die,
Known far and wide as "R.B.T."
Unmanly to sit down and cry?
Be't so, the tears now blin' my e'e.

In childhood's days, in Pollokshaws,
My Grannie, while she ca'd her pirns,
Gave winning smiles and much applause
While teaching me say: R. r. r. o-ber-r-t Bur-r-ns.

Anon I'm there, at Sewell's scule,
The victim of his quips and taws,
Whene'er I failed to read or spell,
Or wandered after hips and haws.

Langside was no sae far awa,
And there langsyne dwelt Auntie Jean:
But truth to tell, her garden braw
Had mair attractions for my een.

Ye ken what grows on apple trees,
 Fine, fine ye ken a grozet bush:
 Wi' painch and pouches filled wi' these
 An' flower-peace-off'ring hame I'd rush.

I daurna seek ye at the rinks,
 I winna meet ye at your inn.
 I've sworn aff gien an' takin' drinks.
 To blame ye for't I'm no the ane.

Yet gin ye come frae Crossmyloof
 And hae an hour or twa to spare,
 We'll welcome ye beneath our roof
 And sit ye in our best arm-chair.

I speak for a' sae far frae hame
 Without their brief, without their proof,
 For fine I ken they feel the same
 As I towards their Crossmyloof.

1912.

LORD SELKIRK AND HIS SCOTTISH SETTLERS

Written for my grandchildren.

Ask Grannie to come ben a wee
 To hear a story told by me,
 The story of our kith and kin
 Who brought King Agriculture in.

Come on! You, Laurie, take the chair,
 And Finlay, you'll be a'richt there;
 Hugh John, you sit beside your Auntie,—
 Your restlessness will keep her cantie.

Now then, Hugh John, you've got your gun,
 And as we're gaun to hae some fun,
 I'll ask you just to fire a shot,
 Then wi' my story aff I'll trot.

That's fine! Well bairnies you maun know
It's just a hundred years ago
Since dauntless Douglas, Selkirk's Lord,
With cash that he could scarce afford,
Bought many, many homesteads here,
Where men might live instead of deer.

For he was angry at Scotch Lords
For controverting Scripture's words
By placing an apostrophe
And they themselves where Lord's should be:
L.O.R.D.S.' apostrophe
Was how they spelt the word you see.
Whereas, if they'd respect this text,
The Lord and His would not be vexed:
"The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof,
The world and they that dwell therein."
At which they were ready to sneer and scoff,
We fear,—the unpardonable sin.

And so, in Scotland, as also here,
Men dared put humbler men to fear,
And said: Be off! we need your crofts
For hunting grounds and pigeon lofts.

Thus, boats, of no Titanic build,
With humble Highlanders were filled
From Sutherland and Stornoway,
And hoisted sail for Hudson's Bay.

II EMBARKING

What ails the folk on Lewis Isle?
They're up and moving early.
Their faces winna wear a smile:
They maun be suff'rin' sairly.
Frae hill and glen
The maids and men
To Stornoway are hieing
Where in Broad Bay

A good ship lay
With Union Jack now flying.

There's dire excitement ev'rywhere.
The clouds hae started weeping.
The bonnie birdies' hearts are sair:
Their sangs are mournfu' cheeping.
The frichtit lambs
Rin to their dams;
The rabbits rin to hiding.
The bairnies stare,
Excitement share,
And thole their parents' chiding.

The contributions o' the puir
Are blood, and brain, and muscle:
In country's need the largest share
They've gien in ev'ry tussle.
But o' the pain
For ev'ry wean
That's sacrificed by Mothers,—
Lord Selkirk's call
Has reached them all:
"Come on wi' me! my brothers."

The parting kiss again is ta'en:
An Island's brokenhearted
For lov'd ones on the raging main
In good ship now departed.
Oh who can gauge
On printed page
The mis'ry o' creation?
Yon little band
In foreign land,—
The nucleus of a nation.

They hoisted sail: for you must know
They had no steamboats long ago;
In fact, and I may say't wi' pride,
The first, "The Comet," on the Clyde
Was launched that very, very year,

And comet like, could disappear,
Come back to where it was before,
And that without a sail or oar.
All, all of which seemed very queer
To folk this time a hundred year.

III
THE JOURNEY

They hoisted sail: for you must know
They had no steamboats long ago.
From Sutherland and Stornoway
They hoisted sail for Hudson's Bay.
But Scottish seamen werena fools
To be tied down by knavish rules:
Sea-room for icebergs, whales and ships,
They found when on their pleasure trips.
And bairnies, be ye sure of this,
That sail would be a sail of bliss:
For, what with bagpipe music sweet
That gars the Scotch tak to their feet,
And everlastingly inspires
With love of Scotland and desires
For liberty and right to live,
And bravely ev'n their lives to give
For those they love, that treat them right.
Gee whiz! dear boys, how they would fight
Just when they're set before the foe
So long's they hear the bagpipes blow.

Their dress, the tartan kilt and plaid,
The Scottish weavers' art displayed.
For comfort these the breeks surpass,
And always please the Scottish lass.
Ev'n Englishmen in modern days
Tak to the Highland kilt for claes.

Arrived at last at Hudson's Bay
They rested at York Factory.
And there, at H.B. Comp'ny's station
Our heroes made some preparation,—

For instance, packing pemmican,
And other food for inner man;
The making of flat-bottomed boat,
That easy ower the shallows float;
And patching the birch bark canoe,
That capsized at their first haloo!
At ither things they were kept busy
And, new to that, it wasna easy.
Maybe the queerest things they saw
Were Indian man and Indian squaw.

At last they're ready for the road,
To do the right and trust in God.
For treach'ry from the very first
Was brooding and betimes would burst.
So wearily they plied the oar
As they had never done before;
And whiles on river, whiles on lake,
And whiles ower rocks, their boats would take;
And whiles they'd have to pull with ropes
To gain the place where lay their hopes.
Whiles carefu' lads wad bare their cloots
To wade the stream and save their boots.
Though when they slid into a hole
Their looks and language were fu' droll.
And whiles strange animals they'd see,
Or stranger still, the lone tepee.

IV THEIR RECEPTION

From Hudson's Bay to Winnipeg
Brought many a weary back and leg,
And they were glad to get to bed
Where Assiniboine joins wi' the Red.
But here again were found in hordes
Men just as daft as Scottish Lords:
Red Indians, by the grace of God
First settlers, said to thirst for blood;
White traders, English, French and Scotch;

Canadians, and a mixed hotch-potch
Called half-breeds (maybe best o' a'),—
Opposed to folk frae far awa
Whose only aim was to increase,
To till the soil, and live in peace.

All these by some hallucination
Pretended too to own creation,
But not to homestead, oh dear no,—
Too mighty they their food to grow:
Fur traders they from Montreal
With hunters at their beck and call,—
Red men, and white, and half-and-half,
Who at our heroes had to laugh
And call them gard'ners, sneeringly.
So senseless they, they could not see
How all important these would be
Ev'n to themselves and progeny:
For these were laying the foundations
Of great food fact'ries for the nations,
Most truly "Empire Builders" they,
As recognized this present day.—

All this King Agriculture brought,
Yea, this, the universal thought
'Tween Britain and her colonies:
Great Britain still to rule the seas,
While followers of these simple men
Compelled to leave yon Highland glen
Shall follow in the "First of Arts"
To raise food for the world's marts.

Though even they are still harassed
By traders who in "trusts" are massed,
Grain growers now are organized
And 'mongst themselves it is surmised
That by and by right shall prevail
Should they at wrong still ply the flail.
But pardon me, I'm off the trail,
And must turn back to tell my tale.

Fool-men had laughed, as yon poor Scots
With pick and spade had delved their plots;
Had built each humble "but an' ben,"
To pattern brought from Highland glen;—
Which all looked much too permanent
For those with minds on evil bent.

And so, alas! the order came,
We ponder on the truth with shame,
From those of our own blood and speech
Who thought, as they were out of reach
Of interference by the law,
They'd strain their pow'r and Scotch blood draw.
The order came: "Exterminate"!
But to do that it came too late.
A massacre was meant, no doubt,
But just in time, when on the route,
The would-be murderers were seen,
Dressed up as Indians, to screen
Their real identity forsooth,
As if the false could hide the truth.

Nathless they killed a score or more,
And held, as pris'ners, three or four,
While others fled to tell the folks
Of what befell at Seven Oaks.
Thus warned some hid till reinforced,
While miscreant murd'ers did their worst,
Destroying everything in sight,
Belonging to the folk in flight.

V

JUSTIFICATION

My simple tale will soon be told,
For Douglas and his soldiers bold
Appeared in person on the scene
And soon had everything serene.
The enemies sent East in chains
Had plenty time to "steep their brains"
How yet to circumvent those schemes

Of which the noble Selkirk dreams,
And laid before their judges lies
We view with wonder and surprise,
Such as: "Lord Selkirk has usurped
The pow'rs which in the East are warped
And woven in Canadian laws!"
Which charge was heard with much applause,
And constables were hurried West,
Whom Selkirk placed under arrest;
Sent East demanding a commission
Of honest men who had permission
To come to Winnipeg and sift
The truth about Lord Selkirk's drift.

Great men are such investigators,
Invented by our legislators,
When chosen as they have the gift
Of righteousness to weigh and sift
The problems that confront the race
Ere yet a wrong prove a disgrace.

And lo! the wise men from the East,
Regaled by Selkirk with a feast
Of noble aims, and noble deeds,
Whose motive: to supply the needs
Of human kind from virgin soil,
By first of arts and honest toil,—
They heard, they saw, made their report:
The enemy had no retort.

VI APPRECIATION

Some calumny, as always, stuck,
And though his folk were now in luck,
Lord Selkirk had to bear his cross
And died unthanked, an Empire's loss.
For how can monuments avail
To recompense a man's travail
In forwarding his peoples good?
Yet stay! Right here there's ample food

For second thought: be on your guard!
Great men do good not for reward.

To the memory of a man,
Every bit of him
Built upon a noble plan,
Every bit of him,
Whose foresight keen could ages span
And ev'ry other means outran
In Empire building,
The wronged ones shielding,
Who prepared to feed the nations,
When reciprocal relations;
But prepared to feed his own
Should war's trumpet blast be blown.
To the memory of a man,
Every bit of him
Built upon a noble plan,
Every bit of him,
Lord Selkirk! one of Scotland's best,
And Founder of the great North West.

1912.

THE MYSTIC

WELL versed in laws of God and man,
A learned and gifted creature;
A rhymers, as a boy he ran
And noted nature's feature;
A graduate of "Queen's," like more
Less gifted yet renowned,
I met him but yestreen, and swore
A great man I had found.

His mind, a myst'ry to himself,
Would plunge into life's stream
And when it got beyond its depth,
He'd scream, and scream and scream.
Then he old Pegasus would mount

And choose the mystic way
To ride through highest spheres, no doubt,
Where mysteries doth stray.

In those unfathomable heights
He'd, sure enough, get lost,
And failing to be understood
Would then give up the ghost.
Such was the man I met yestreen.
His name it was Frizell,
Whose thoughts flow up to heav'n serene
Or eke sink down to hell.

I love to meet a man like this:
I understand the breed.
When Highland Scotch and Irish kiss,
A mystic spirit's freed,
Which neither needs the bagpipes' skirl
Nor yet the blarney stone.
Give him a theme, his head he'll swirl,—
Blank verse or rhyme's turned on.

Ah! what can stay such soaring soul?
Or who can it defy?
Begorra Sor, the porridge bowl
And buttermilk we'll try.

1912.

TO THE MEMORY OF CAPTAIN RICHARD DARGIE

Veteran Winnipeg Fireman.

FROM what we know of this brave man,
From actions on the street,
He'll interfere wi' Satan's plan,
His burning feats defeat.
Just let him rest frae work a spell:
He'll view yon fearfu' spot;
Then dash Dargai-like to hell
And burst the brimstone pot.

Syne humbly he will take his place
 'Way in a backmost seat,
And frae yon Brither hide his face,
 And maybe, quietly greet.
But lo! a voice will startle him:
 "Dick Dargie, come up here.
A cup o' kindness to the brim,
 Fill up, Dick: dinna fear."

12th November, 1912.



THE RING

TUNE: "*Laird o' Cockpen.*"

TWA young folk had courted, I don't know how long,
But plainly I saw their affection was strong,
So I wasna surprised, when ae nicht in the spring,
The happy wee lass cam and shewed me the ring.
As I looked at the symbol, what think ye I saw?
Tied up in a halo of gold were the twa,
And the knot was of diamonds, a beautiful thing,
And they didna want out o' this wonderful ring.

I looked a wee longer, and lo and behold,
They seemed to have duties to do manifold;
And from ev'ry direction some good things they'd bring,
Yet never be out o' this wonderfu' ring.
I think I got dazzled, or say hynotized,
And saw that another ring there was much prized;
But no diamonds on this second one could I see;
And it held them sae ticht that they couldna get free.

Oh I wish the twa weel, and I wish the twa wed,
 And I hope they'll be happy, and aye be weel fed;
 And if wishes be potent as parson maintains,
 I'm sure they will thrive and hae plenty o' weans.
 If this wishy-washy bit screed o' a sang
 Were filled wi' my wishes 'twould be rather lang,
 So this, as brief chorus, I'll ask ye to sing:
 May their joy be as endless as yon bonnie ring.

1912.



LINES

*Acknowledging receipt of a little fir tree, from Mr. and Mrs.
 James Hunter, Christmas 1912.*

Yon lovely tree frae you to me
 May symbolize the Christian life:
 The prickly burr of Scottish fir,
 Rough road for bairnies, man and wife.

Wi' good intent we circumvent
 And trim the tree before we climb:
 So as we plod along life's road,
 We smooth't for some at Christmas time.

May we at last, like fir-tree-mast,
 Find fav'ring wind to drive us hame;
 To ope our eyes in just surprise,
 And praise for aye the favourite name.

LINES

*Acknowledging receipt of book entitled "Black Creek
Stopping House," from Mr. and Mrs. George
Fisher, Christmas 1912.*

YON book by "Nellie L. McClung,"
Entitled "Black Creek Stopping House,"
The cockles of my heart hath wrung,
As dedicated to my spouse.

The dedication won my heart!
I have not read another line,
But bade it Godspeed and depart
To hands dear Nellie makes divine:

One "Godly," "noble" and "beloved,"
"A Western Woman Pioneer,"
Whose ways yon dedication proved
True to the life, as she is here.

Were there no story 'tween the boards,
Just this true tribute to our girls,
It stands immortal, and affords
Light to the world as long's it whirls.

LINES

*Acknowledging receipt from Miss Adair, of painting by her,
entitled "The Auld Brig o' Doon,"
New Year's Day, 1913.*

ON Hogmanay I had a dream,
For I had gone betimes to bed:
I waded up a lovely stream;
Auld Brig o' Doon was overhead;
When suddenly my thoughts of love
Were banished by dread yells of fear.
I raised my eyes to bridge above,
Saw flaming words "'Tis Still Leap Year";

And then, as if pursued by fiens,
 A frantic crowd of men passed by,
 While suffragettes just out their 'teens
 Sent forth a disappointed cry.
 I woke: the whistles died away
 That ushered in this New Year's Day.

Selah!

There are bridges and bridges, to that you'll agree:
 There's the new bridge of friendship between you and me;
 But some bridges are weak, some as strong as the sea,
 As for instance, the Bridge from B.C. to A.D.

At Christmas the latter comes more into view,
 For the Bible Brig's auld, and we're testing the New:
 So we crowd on't wi' faith and good deeds not a few,
 And the people rejoice,—the Foundations are true.

LINES

*Written to a friend, Harry Beck, enclosing my photograph
 and a song, and addressed to his homestead, Crocus P.O.,
 via Battleford, but returned with words on
 envelope "not called for."*

DEAR Harry, see, we think of you,
 And wonder if with hand on pleugh
 Ye strike the furrow true and straight,
 Or try to cut the figure eight!
 Or laying down the whip and lines
 You're hankering after fair Des Moines
 Where you and your best girl got wed
 Ere coming here to make your bed.
 Or has she got acclimatized
 Wi' maybe twa-three bairns baptized?
 Or like your auld frien' R.B.T.
 So lost in life's soliloquy
 As scarce to gie auld things a thought
 But prays for what the future's fraught.
 Ah weel! no more we'll speculate,

For, Hal, you see it's getting late,
And auld, as young, should be in bed.
So, after I have this re-read,
I'll wish you Happy Christmas Day,
Guid New Year,—aye and monie mae.

December 1912.

PETER!

*Son of Captain Robert Scott, hero of the
Antarctic Region.*

FROM the home of the blizzard and land of the snow
To wee Peter the great our condolences go,
For he traced his Dad's steps, with a child's adoration.
May the deeds of such Dads aye be our inspiration!

We, we are the children, dear Peter, who know
Just how cold we can be when it's forty below:
And with less in our stomachs than what should be there
We can guess how your Daddy with nothing would fare.

We've been told of the heroes who died with your Dad,
And can just shake our heads and pronounce it "too bad":
But we learn that they died that we children should know
To beware of yon country of "beautiful snow."

And again we've been told, what has meant much to you,
That Dad's wee band of heroes to each had been true:
But that science enlightened resumes its bold tread
Though the field of research prove the searchers' deathbed.

May your Mother, dear Pete, find in you her reward
For her love for your Daddy and constant regard
For your own little self. And in this your great loss
May our sympathy help you to "take up your cross."

In the name of the children of Manitoba.

15th February, 1913.

THE WEDDING

*Of David Stewart and Bell Milne, 15th February, 1913,
written for, and sung at.*

PROVIDENCE provideth
Mates for one and all.
While the world abideth
Love can never fall.
Here again they stand,
Lovers, hand in hand.

Ring of gold, love's token,
Not by them despised,
Never to be broken,
Always to be prized,
Makes them man and wife
Blithely facing life.

Multiply! Replenish!
Millions wanted West!
War can but diminish:
Marriages are blest.
Fruitfulness our prayer
For this happy pair.

Selah.
Come ye single trachles,
Do your level best:
Rain your rice and bachles,
Jealousy confessed.
To our side they'll rin:
Our side yet will win.

POSTSCRIPT

*To a letter referring to Silver Wedding of my sister, Mary,
and her husband, Provost James Fisher, held at
Rothesay, Scotland, 25th January, 1913.*

WHEN your Golden Wedding comes
Let me know by "wireless":
I'll be where the wavelet hums,
Strong, and true and tireless.
Just keep calling "Bobus"! Bob!
I myself will answer:
"Getting there will be a job,
But I'm on my prancer.
I'll come by the Milky Way:
Watch for shooting star, Sir,
Dropping into Rothesay Bay,
Come from 'cross the bar, Sir.
Go ahead then, I'll be in:
Can't see me, because I'm thin!"

7th March, 1913.



A WELCOME HAME

Love, duty, immortality!
Believing in this trinity
What matters it where'er we be,
In air, on earth, or on the sea?

Auld Scotland visited again!
"For Auld Langsyne" the sweet refrain:
Her mountain peaks, auld fashioned rain,—
God bless ye a'! Amen! Amen!

Be't blithe, or sad, the parting kiss,
A welcome hame is not amiss;
The waiting frien' wi' word like this:
The weans' embrace completes the bliss.

Love, duty, immortality!
Believing in this trinity
Kind friens on ilka side the sea
A', aye are proud to welcome thee.

To Mr. and Mrs. George Fisher,

23rd April, 1913.



SONG

For my sick friend Mrs. George Fisher.

Puir body, Mrs. Fisher,
Spitefu' fate has laid her low.
Long life and health we wish her,
Strength to lay this daring foe.
'Mang her friens she is a treasure,
In her hame, aboon a' measure.
Pow'rs aboon, ye maun hae pleasure
Healing sic a Mither O.

Sweet singer, lovely woman,
Faithful wife to man sae braw;
Fine Mother, good, and human,
Kind to a' frae far awa.
Come ye kindly Indian Summer,
Johnny Frost's nae welcome comer:
Bring to her a healthful hummer,
Aeroplane or automo.

LINES

*Acknowledging receipt of present of butter, from
Mr. and Mrs. Brown of Isafold.*

DEAR Farmer Brown,
Name of renown
In hist'ry and in letters:
The soul of one
"Goes marching on"
Since loos'ning slav'ry's fetters;
"Rab and his friens"
(Put hand in jeans
And go buy Doc. Brown's story);
A dog, a man,
Find if you can,
More fitting fame and glory.

Your butter guid
Supplies the bluid
With ev'ry thing it wanted:
Heat, colour ,strength,
Gaun a' the length,
(Uncommon length, that's granted.)
But bide a wee:
Auld R.B.T.
Does credit to sic butter,
Which shines his face,
Improves his pace,
And cures his tongue frae stutter.

May your guid wife
Through lengthy life
Reflect on this while churning:
Her butter good,
As butter should
Prevents a heap o' girning.
On scones or bread
It taks the lead;

That 'tis sae scarce, 'tis pity;
Reflects her sang
Where'er it gang,
Be't to a toun or city.

Each farmer's wife
Has unco strife
Wi' mair than household duties:
She maks the bread
Has pigs to feed,
When men around are "futies."
In fact and truth
She fills each mouth
And often fills the purses;
Yet a' the thanks,—
The men play pranks
That weel deserve her curses.

But woman-kind
Has time in mind,
When young, as lads and lasses,
And Jock to Jen
Was best o' men,
While now they're senseless asses.
Yet she forgives,
And while she lives,
Remembering aye her waddin,
She keeps her vows
And milks the cows,
Though kickit by a bad ane.

Now I maun stop.
Yet let me hope
The sentiments I utter
You'll credit gie,
Not unto me,
But to your ain guid butter.

20th July, 1913.

LINES

On parting with friends, Mr. and Mrs. James Hunter.

THIS life is so fleeting!
There's parting then meeting:
"Goodbye my sweet baby from me you are free;
Then after some weeping,
Some rest and some sleeping,
Your mammy may ask her sweet baby to see."
Such partings though painful
Need seldom be baneful:
The more partings through life, the more meetings there be;
More folk to condole with,
New friends to console with.
So these are the thoughts of your friend R.B.T.

A CONFESSION

I CONFESS
I transgress,
Making mess
Of the art.
Yet the thing
That I sing
I've to fling
From my heart:
For there's that
'Neath my hat
That's not fat
On the brain
But the prime
Gift of rhyme
That's sublime
To make plain.

CHESTNUT, ETHELBERT, AUBREY

BETWEEN ye twa, on Ethelbert,
I'll hae an awfu' time:
But bide a wee, as true's I'm Bert,
I feel I'm in my prime,
And I shall try to haud my ain
No matter how ye squeeze.
To better me ye're fidgin-fain
Because ye hae bawbees!

But hoots mon! hauch! and likewise chauch!
What mair hae you than I?
I've claes to cleed, and best o' bread
Frae parritch up to pie.
Sae come awa, an' dinna thraw:
We want to warm this house
That sae we may to our last day,
Keep friens sae kind and crouse.

1913.

On going to 133 Ethelbert Street, Winnipeg, to reside, Mr. Thomson wrote the above lines to mail to his two friends, Mr. George Fisher of Chestnut Street, and Mr. James Hunter of Aubrey Street, Ethelbert being between these two streets. Both friends "dropped in" before the lines were mailed.

A CARD

To my friends far away, Christmas 1913.

With nothing in my pocket I
Resort to my old cranium
Wherein to find the cheerfu' cry:
"Hurrah for the millennium!"
For surely Christmas cards do shew
In various miscellanum
The Christ within all those who know
And walk on His proscenium.
There's not a thing that I could buy
Would give more pleasure while you live:
For Love, in reciprocity,
Compels part of my life to give:—

IT

The thing that never dies, the soul,
Hae, here's a bit o' mine,
Can from its inmost part unroll
Like ball of binding twine,
And firmer tie true lover's knot,
As now at Christmastide,
Yet never lose in length a jot,
Howe'er sae far friens bide.

LINES

*Acknowledging receipt of a basket of Roman hyacinths, and
fern, from Mrs. George Fisher to Mrs. Thomson.
Christmas 1913.*

ROMAN hyacinth, and fern,
Flow'r of song shall surely earn:
For the hyacinthine bells
Of the Christmas music tells;
While the fabric of the fern
Delicacy bids us learn.

See how peacefully those flow'rs
 Live to shame these lives of ours:
 How the beauty of their build
 Speaks of how with love they're filled,
 While the hate in hearts of men
 Shews in form and deeds again.
 Would men but learn to live like flow'rs
 Goodwill and peace were surely ours.



WEDDING SONG

*Supposed to be sung by father and mother of bride
 (or bridegroom).*

TUNE: "My Ain Countrie."

He:

Oh you're unco chaut the nicht, wife, aye your'e unco chaut
 the nicht.
 Had we been in bonnie Scotland, this thing micht hae
 been a' richt,
 Wi' some guid friens to console ye, wha cam through the
 same auld plicht.
 But you're unco chaut the nicht, lass, aye ye're unco chaut
 the nicht.

She:

I'm no sae chaut the nicht guidman, I'm no sae chaut the
 nicht,
 For young folk maun be mairrit, an' I think that that's
 a' richt,
 But wi' joy and sorrow meetin', I just canna see the licht,
 Syne that's the way I'm greetin', as I grat on his birth-nicht.

He:

Gie your bonnie een a dicht, wife, gie your bonnie een a
 dicht,
 For I've seldom seen you greetin', an' I dinna like the sicht.
 In a year ye'll be a grannie, an' ye'll think that that's a'
 richt.

Dod! I think I'll tak my flicht, wife, aye it's then I maun
tak flicht.

She:

Deed ye'll do nae sic thing, lad, though ye buy an aeroplane:
Ye'll be as proud's a peacock, gin ye see a bonnie wean.
An' as daft-like things hae happened, as a lassac haein twa,
An' I daur ye, daur ye, daur ye, ev'n for three to rin awa.

He:

Now I've got ye whaur I want ye; weel I ken that fiery
glance.
Ye'll be singin' like a linty, and be wantin' me to dance.
See the friens a' roun' are lauchin', and the modest,
blushin' bride,
Sends this singer to the clachan, whaur she wishes he
wad bide.

She:

Guidman ye've been a kind ane, an' our hame's a heaven
on earth,
And the marriage o' our young folk is akin to second birth,
Which wad mean a repetition, and the savin' o' our race,
Mony souls in guid condition to bring smiles to Father's
face.

Written for my friends Mr. and Mrs. George Fisher, and sung at
the fortieth anniversary of my wedding, 21st January, 1914.—R.B.T.

THE QUEER FOLK

OH wha can fathom nature's laws
Or gie a reason for the cause
That folk when born in Pollokshaws
Should a' be ca'd "the queer folk"?
As for mysel', I dinna ken,
But offer ye a specimen,
An' twa—three traits I freely len'
For I'm ane o' "the queer folk."

Just put your questions. I'll not budge
Nor cast ye aff wi' words like "fudge."
Select your jury and your judge,
And try ane o' "the queer folk."
Ye're silent a', like modest men.
Langsyne when I was five foot ten,
And looked like ten foot-five ye ken,
I was ane o' "the queer folk."

And then, when later on in life
I thought that I should hae a wife,
Though lasses 'roun' were unco rife,
I proved ane o' "the queer folk,"
And looked for beauty of the mind
Wi' gentle voice and manners kind,
Wha to my fauts would aye be blind:
I was ane o' "the queer folk."

Ignoring not our pedigree,
Preferred wi' our ain wings to flee:
That's been the way wi' R.B.T.,
Again, ane o' "the queer folk."
It's been my joy when friens like ye
Hae gathered 'roun' to hae a spree,
A sang as fresh as it could be
To sing, just like "the queer folk."

Had my forebears been a' the same
And kept their sangs and rhymes for hame,
No that I mean ev'n ane to blame
That I'm ane o' "the queer folk,"
But just the never-failing stings
That daft ambition surely brings,
And to the humble rhymers clings,
There wad be fewer queer folk.

Examinations, I confess,
Are often lost or won by guess.

But they wha ken, a', mair or less,
Belang a' to the queer folk.
An' my last stane gaes birlin' down
To vow that Bobbie Burns, the loon,
Had maist to do in yon we'toun,
As forebear to some queer folk.

Winnipeg, 21st January, 1914.

Written for, and recited at the fortieth anniversary of my wedding.—R.B.T.

LINES

Celebrating the fortieth anniversary of our wedding.

'Tis forty years to-day since we were wed,
Aye, forty years of love and life well spent,
"In pastures green" by Providence been led,
While raising to the Shepherd lambs He lent.
Nor does it matter now the paths we've trod
Since woe had chased us from our pastures green:
Where'er we found ourselves we trusted God,
And in each plight and place been heard and seen.

Winnipeg, 21st January, 1914.

Ann Fraser Munro of Linlithgow, Scotland, and Robert Burns Thomson of Glasgow, Scotland, married 21st January, 1874.

KEEP YOUR E'E ON PAISLEY

Words used by Mr. William Wilson, Secretary of St. Andrew's Society of Winnipeg, in his acceptance of invitation to the fortieth anniversary of my wedding.

THAT's a funny thing to say:
"Keep your e'e on Paisley!"
Why should we do that I pray?
Keep our e'e on Paisley?
We've nae silver spoons to lose!
Though ye think sae I suppose.
Maybe it's a toast? Here goes,—
"Keep your e'e on Paisley."

Paisley maks some things we need,
"Keep your e'e on Paisley":
Anchor Works' or Coutts's thread,
"Keep your e'e on Paisley";
Corn flour starch and pea-meal brose,
Handkerchies to blaw your nose,
Harness shawls and tartan hose,—
"Keep youve'e on Paisley."

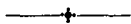
Paisley men are men o' worth,
"Keep your e'e on Paisley":
Arrol bridged the Tay, or Forth,
"Keep your e'e on Paisley";
Mony Paisley men are here
Building business tier by tier.
A' their names ye maunna spier,—
"Keep your e'e on Paisley."

Paisley folk are here the nicht,
"Keep your e'e on Paisley":
Willie Wilson, he's a' richt
"Keep your e'e on Paisley."
Crook your elbow just like me,

Think the wee drap's in your e'e,
Drink this toast wi' R.B.T.,—
"Keep your e'e on Paisley"!

Winnipeg, 21st January, 1914.

Written and sung on same evening by R.B.T.



HERE'S LANG LIFE TO GRANNIE O

GAELIC TUNE: "*The Tocherless Lass.*"

TELL me not of bonnie lasses:
I hae ane their belle surpasses.
Drink to her, come fill your glasses,—
Here's lang life to Grannie O!

Grannie she's been tried and tested:
In her sphere been never bested.
Now frae care we hae her rested,—
Here's lang life to Grannie O!

Fu' o' virtue's many graces,
Free frae vice that sae debases,
Queen, for lang, in lowly places,—
Here's lang life to Grannie O!

Place her in the chair of honour,
Let your lasses look upon her:
Praises due, I'll be the donor,—
Here's lang life to Grannie O!

Had we never had a Grannie,
We'd been neither maid nor mannie:
We'd been something no sae cannie,—
Here's lang life to Grannie O!

Bonnie lass gin ye've ambition
Granniewise, change your condition:
Time and Tam, in due fruition,—
Here's lang life to Grannie O!

Winnipeg, 1914.

LO, THE SHAMROCK OF OLD IRELANDGAELIC TUNE: "*Ho oro's na horo eile.*"

Lo, the shamrock of old Ireland,
Trodden down by foot of fire-brand,
Thornless those, no thistley prickles
To warn her weans of blood-stained sickles.

Woe betide men of ambition,
Well aware of her tradition,
Scorning peaceful avocation,
Ruthless disturbers of a nation.

Better far for Ireland's glory,
Divers creeds were not her story:
Love of neighbours, universal
Should give all other creeds dispersal.

God is love, and love is heaven:
War is hell and hellish leaven.
Monsters lead poor men to slaughter,
Scorning loved emblem and loved daughter.

Lo, the shamrock of old Ireland,
Trodden down by foot of fire-brand,
Thornless those, no thistley prickles
To warn her weans of blood-stained sickles.

21st March, 1914.

THE GLORIOUS GAEL HAS WON

Inscribed to a First Settler.

GAELIC TUNE. "*Air-Fal-al-O*"

OH here's to the hills that first rose out of the sea,
And here's to the rills returning homeward with glee,
And here's to the wind, the breath of the spirits most free,—
Inspiring with deeds and song, Auld Scotland for thee.

The heather, the hill, true love, a man and a maid;
The mist and the moon, and oh, the pipes and the plaid!
The music so sweet but tells that true lovers are there
And answering pipes' love-song of some other pair.

The wedding, the dance, the joy of ev'ry true friend:
The parting has come! The pair on heaven depend.
The ocean is crossed, the battle of life has begun:
A home for themselves and children has to be won.

Immortal are these first settlers of this good land:
Ah, who would not glory in their annals to stand?
In home, church, and school, foundation of nation they laid.
The glorious Gael has won by plough, axe and spade!

This song was written to suit the Gaelic tune at the suggestion of
Dr. Thomas Campbell.

THE SELKIRK SETTLERS

SONG

GAELIC TUNE: "*Fear a' Bhata*" (The Boatman)

LOVE of country nor lovers' sighing
Can contend aye with fate's defying:
Loth to leave all, new country trying,
Brave souls move Westward with faith undying.

Noble Selkirk's prophetic vision,—
Waving wheatfields, in time's fruition,
Roused to action his one ambition
For landless Scotchmen to make provision.

Hudson's Bay, men, and ships engaging,
Overcoming old Ocean's raging,
War on nature's obstructions waging,
Lo! land of promise, some fears assuaging.

See the van-guard of great procession,
Peaceful farmers to take possession
'Gainst Red River make slow progression,—
Sad symbol of near dark-red oppression.

Back to old Norway House sent flying,
Leaving Semple and twenty dying,
Field of "Seven Oaks" for vengeance crying
On foes whose masters were law-defying.

To the helpless, Lord Selkirk hastened:
Friends were rescued and foes were chastened;
Firmly 'stablished on sure foundation
The nucleus of a future nation.



LINES

*To the memory of a brother Scot,
Sir William Whyte.*

HE was a kindly Scot
In all simplicity:
No bumptiousness, all men confess,
E'er marred his modesty.

A canny Scot was he
From hasty judgment free:
Not slow, but sure; his workmen poor
Judged worthy their bawbee.

His personality
So cosmopolitan
No matter who, or Greek or Jew,
He met as brother man.

A model man was he
In sifting wrong from right:
And without fear men in each sphere
Pronounced Sir William,—“White.”

22nd April, 1914.

Written on returning from Sir William's funeral to-day.—R.B.T

LINES

*To Mr. and Mrs. Kehoe, 4th Thursday,
28th April, 1914.*

My Dear Sir and Madam,
Fourth Thursday's at hand.
Descended from Adam
We quite understand
That his children should play
And this Eden enjoy,
And we're glad that you pray
That we'd play at Kehoe.

But alack, and alas!
For dear wifie is lame
And the days as they pass
Must be a' spent at hame.
As for young folk like you,
A few minutes employ
On our deer mat. keek through,
Cry “hello”! and “Kehoe”!

BROTHERHOOD SONG

OR rich or puir we're brithers a'
 To them that come frae far awa'
 And Winnipeg will hae a' fa'
 Gin e'er we change our tune man.
 A stranger in our gates looks grim,—
 An outstretched haun can speak to him.
 His emptiness filled to the brim
 To brotherhood comes roun' man.

The peace within we aye can trace
 In sparkling e'e and smiling face:
 Where storms usurp 'tis no disgrace
 To say yon words: "Be still man."
 Good-will and peace for ev'ry ane:
 War only 'gainst the cause o' sin.
 As brithers a' we're sure to win:
 We'll work for't wi' a will man.

CHORUS:

For brotherhood, true brotherhood,
 We'll work as all good brothers should.
 The ills of life shall be withstood
 By universal brotherhood.

18th May, 1912.

A PICTURE O' HAME

GAELIC TUNE "*Mo Dhachaidh.*"

THOUGH we're no in the Hielans o' Scotland the nicht
 Our hearts are ower there, and our thoughts are a' richt:
 The tear in the e'e o' home-sick anes we dicht,
 And help to cure them o' that evil.
 Manitoba's our hame an' a guid ane it's been,
 A' things counted in, for we cam to't quite green.
 Just work like the "deevil," I'll back ye my frien':
 Be sensible, sober and civil.

Frae the pen to the pleugh seems a gye backward yerker,
Frae the pleugh to the pen is a steep uphill jerk,
But between thae twa p's there's some guid honest work,—

When a's come an' gane, it doesn't matter.

For wi' lads as wi' lasses there's ae aim in life
And that's to pair aff as guidman and guidwife,
Replenish this earth, where a' guid things are rife,
Improve on the hames ower the water.

A guid picture o' hame may be something like this:
A cozy wee house, and some folk you could kiss;
The figures I'd see wad but brighten my bliss,

A wife, and wee weans, and a Grannie.

In a But an' a Ben hae been raised the grand men,
And Mithers lang syne wad bring up nine or ten.

Now you bonnie lasses, when lookin' for men,

Tak tent o' thae virtues o' Grannie.

O what maks them sae happy? Is that what ye spier?

The same as in nature, a clean atmosphere,

Wi' father and mither, though never severe,

Aye watchfu' and warnin'—like Grannie.

And when trouble comes ben, as it does now and then,

O wha to the rescue comes daunnerin' ben?

The father and mither and youngsters a' ken

They'll aye get "first aid" frae auld Grannie.

This song was written to suit the Gaelic tune at the suggestion of
Dr. Thomas Campbell.

ODE TO EMPIRE

HAIL! British Empire, royal union of Nations!
All other empires pay tribute to thee,—
Tribute in people of all kinds and stations,
Gazing at Triune Cross, emblem of the free.
Ev'ry emergency strengthens thy supremacy
Supplanting evil with good to meet thy plea.

CHORUS:

Hail! Empire founded on Christianity
Seeking the welfare of all humanity.
All nations admire thy strength and charity:
All faiths can trust thy peaceful urbanity.

Blow, zephyrs blow, our flag of Empire waving
To shew our loyalty to Crown and Cross,
To tell all men our Empire stands for paving
Way to good-will and peace,—for no nation loss.
No servile people, no tyrant to rule over us:
Humblest as highest can to himself be true.

Hail! Empire founded, etc.

Proud, proud are we of all our fair Dominions,
Isles of the sea and continental lands.
Each stands so free, yet eagle-like with pinions,
Ready to rally at our Empire's commands.
Strong their foundations laid by our loyal ancestors:
Squarely each corner our King has truly laid.

Hail! Empire founded, etc.

Labor and love shall overcome all ill, aye:
Justice to all shall conquer ev'ry foe.
Praying for peace but ready for reveille
A righteous Empire ever stronger shall grow.
No jealous rival shall e'er disturb her righteousness:
No other empire need try to overthrow.

Hail! Empire founded, etc.

The original (later amended) of the preceding ode was written in a competition inaugurated by a certain society, the competition having been for a prize of one hundred dollars for the best poem of an Imperial nature to be set to music composed by a certain musician. The committee supplied a sheet of the music to each competitor, and the latter was to write his composition to fit the music,—quite a difficult task for an old Scotsman imbued from childhood with Scottish tunes and rhymes. However, Mr. Thomson wrote his composition in July 1914, and mailed it to the committee. Then in March 1915, not having heard any result of the competition, he inquired, and was informed that no poem of sufficient merit having been received, no prize was to be awarded. Mr. Thomson's remarks on that decision he wrote with more ease than his ode, and were found as a foot-note to it, in rhyme:—

This is no hymn of hate;
With others it competed;
Together 'twas their fate
To be unjustly treated.

Invited to the fray,
The contract was completed:
But on the fateful day
Contestants were defeated.

Nor prize nor thanks were given
For mental, soul-wrung vapour:
The contract's now in heaven,
Endorsed "a scrap of paper."

BRITANNIA'S DEFENDERSTUNE: "*The Star Spangled Banner.*"

WHEN the German war lords in the name of their god
 Try to strangle the progress of civilization,
 Oh 'tis then that Britannia at home and abroad
 Calls: "To arms for the right and the old world's
 salvation!"

Then a Kaiser's poor slaves find in ignoble graves
 Their reward for obedience to blaspheming knaves:
 But Britannia's defenders, who for freedom have died,
 Shall for ever and aye be by men glorified.

Scorn we militarism with its aims so unjust,
 And its toast, "To the day," when its full strength is ready.
 Shall it conquer? Oh no! In brute strength is its trust,—
 Not in "God and the right," and then "Steady, boys,
 steady."

They shall die with the sword, by all peoples abhorred,—
 Their reward for obeying their boastful war lord:
 But Britannia's defenders, who for freedom have died,
 Shall forever and aye be by men glorified.

Labor Day, 1914.

**DESCENDANTS OF BURNS**

*An answer to the remarks on Burns which appeared in the
 Winnipeg Telegram of 28th April, 1913, above
 the signature "*****."*

DEAR "*****," ye mak me laugh,
 Or laugh and swear by turns,
 Though to your health my cup I quaff
 For candle-light on Burns.
 But surely you can better yon
 By reading what Burns says
 And while his words you brood upon,
 Get help from my X-rays.

You say descendants he has none!
You're far, far frae the truth:
The day before your screed was run
Twelve dined with me, forsooth.
But gin a sample ye wad see,
That is if not ashamed,—
Just come along and dine with me,
Or else for aye be blamed.

(Selah)

Burns robbed of his descendants!
Like Shakespeare of his works.
Up! up we are defendants
Of braw, brave Scottish storks
Whose duty was correction,
Where legal ties had failed,
By suffragettes' selection,
Whose plan has quite prevailed
Like Judah's line by Tamar,
Through Solomon to Burns!
First Suffragette we name her,
Who only wanted bairns:
We sing the old doxology
Instead of an apology.

(Selah)

Greater mistake was never told
Than that our Bard had no descendant.
Biography is surely bold
In having "*****" attendant.
I would have "*****" for truth,
As Walter Scott had him intended
But publishing error, forsooth,
Was not what "*****" defended.

Think ye Burns gave his life for naught?
Or that his pow'r lay in his rhyme?
Go search, and find his dearest thought
Was for his weans, to him sublime:
Read ye his "Nature's Law," then find
Fulfilment of his prophecy.

Try not truth-loving folk to blind
With biographic sophistry.

My Great-grandsire was ever brave,
Nor hid his strength, nor hid his weakness.
Years ere friends laid him in his grave
He did brave deed with matchless meekness:
He brought his daughter home to "Jean,"
His daughter by another woman
Of name, Ann Hyslop Park, I ween
Had loved him well and was but human.
Jean Armour Burns had heart of gold,
And treated Betty Burns fu' kindly:
The wee pet lamb put in her fold,
And Burns' and Ann's fault treated blindly.

Soon Betty Burns won ev'ry heart:
Her father's pride and eke stepmother's.
The lassie filled a sister's part
Nor e'er was shamed by her halfbrothers.
She minded when her father died:
Remembered how he hugged and kissed her;
Remembered crowds and how they cried
As to the grave went he who blest her:
Blest her with features like his own,
Blest her with loving, kindly ways,
Blest her, his weakness overthrown,
Gave her life, children, length of days.

Through Betty Burns the world's made better:
Descendants of our Bard are many.
All can peruse Jean Burns' letter
To prove how faithful she as any:
She saw her Betty married well,
Gave parting kiss in her own dwelling,
Cared for her more than words can tell,
And proud of Burns' descendants swelling.

It pleased Mr. Thomson to be asked about his relationship to the Scottish Bard, for few, if any, understood better the heart of Burns and what a great and truly good man he was. On the other hand Mr. Thomson felt that Burns had reason to be pleased with his

descendants. Some of them are in Australasia, some in Scotland, and others in Canada. Of those who are in Canada, some are not through school yet, and among others are weavers, manufacturers, farmers, actuaries, lawyers, doctors, etc.—all good citizens and doing well. On Burns' night in the month before Mr. Thomson died, he remarked that the usual celebrations that day, no doubt, were being held throughout the world, with the usual speeches in appreciation of the Bard, but little about what was dearest to the heart of Burns, his children.



RESPONSE

*To invitation from my old friend Elias Jones
to wedding of his son Thomas.*

DEAR Mister Jones,

With sigh and groans
The world is nearly filled,
Which, truthful, tell that "war is hell,"
And blood should ne'er be spilled.
This dreadful state brought on by fate
And would be lords of earth,
Must interfere with those sincere
In foiling death by birth.

Of ours who breed, or ours who bleed,
All for the right divine,
'Tis hard to say who wins the day,
For neither task's supine:
The young man wed to marriage bed
Successors to ensure
Or mortal fine on firing line
Folks' freedom to secure.

Our Empire's need is bairns indeed
To fill betimes war's gaps:
Or Welsh or Scot they must be got
For sure, and not perhaps.

But what I'd say to you today
In honest, earnest tones
Is only, just in Tom to trust,—
Keep up the name of Jones.

14th December, 1914.



GET A MOVE ON !

*A marching song written for Manitoba's Contingents to the
Canadian Expeditionary Force.*

TUNE: "*My Ain Countrie.*"

I

WE have come from Manitoba
Where we left some real estate,
But we're after some in Europe
And we hope we're not too late.
As the Germans jumped on Brussels,
Well, we think it not a sin
Just to limber up our muscles
For a jump at old Berlin.

CHORUS:

"Get a move on" is our motto
When we plough the fields out West;
"Get a move on" is our motto
When our Allies are opprest.
We will fight the fiends inhuman
Who have laid poor Belgium waste,
Who have maimed and murdered women
And the babies at their breast.

II

When a "kultur" coloured nation,
Like the sons of Germany,
Tries to wipe out all creation,
What can cool Canadians say?

Well we'll help to solve the problem
In our ordinary way:
Though we may not mean to rob them
We will surely win "The Day."

CHORUS: "Get a move on," etc.

III

We are true to "scraps of paper"
When endorsed by Parliament;
We are true to "scraps of paper"
When our word or money's lent;
We are true to "scraps of paper"
When our love and wisdom's spent
And the golden rule unbroken,—
Though our blood and earth be blent.

CHORUS: "Get a move on," etc.

IV

We must have a righteous Empire.
We insist on righteous laws:
As ourselves, we love our neighbour
But will fight in righteous cause.
When we beat the big blonde bully,
Or like heroes meet our fate,
We'll go home to Manitoba
Or take German real estate.

Winnipeg, 1914.

SCRAP

*Inscribed on my daughter Lily's church letter when moving
from Central Congregational to Westminster,
2nd October, 1914.*

David Christie, D.D.,

Dear Sir,

ANITHER wand'ring sheep
Returning to your fold
Care for and kindly keep
In pastures never old.
Her forebears were a' Scotch,
But gye an' ill to please:
They hankered for hotch potch
Aye mair than for bawbees.
A shepherd kind ye'll be
To this our ae pet lamb
Are prayers o' R.B.T.
And Ma's,

Yours,

The Auld Ram.

SCRAP

DESCRIPTIVE of the newest gown:
She's put her nighty upside down,
In consequence of which you know
Her shape resembles cupid's bow.

TWO TO ONE ON TOMMY

TUNE: "*John Brown's Body*."

WE have heard of Tommy Atkins and we want to see him
work:

We shall follow him to Europe where his challengers all
lurk,

We shall see him beat the German and the Austrian and
Turk,—

Ere we come marching home.

CHORUS: Glory, glory to our union,
Glory, glory to our union,
Glory, glory to our union:
Our union inspires our song.

Mr. Atkins heard that Billy had invaded Belgium,
Mr. Atkins heard that Albert had put Billy on his bum,
Mr. Atkins heard that Billy meant to "Hack his way," by
gum,—

But he'll go marching home.

It is two to one on Tommy that he beats the silly Hun,
It is two to one on Tommy that he beats him two to one,
It is two to one on Tommy that the job will be well done,—
Ere he goes marching home.

We are little Belgi's allies and we glory in the fact,
We are friendly France's pallies and we glory in the pact,
We are Canada's Contingent to the great h*-killing act,—
"So long"! we'll soon be home.

Winnipeg, 1914.

THE FALL OF KULTUR

*SAID a German of "kultur," said he:
"We have climbed to the top of the tree,
We have beaten the wide world in arts,
And in science we know all its parts."

Then he gazed all around at creation
And he said: "We must kill ev'ry nation!"
Thus he fell. Sound his knell!

To a Kaiser of "kultur" he came
And explained all the rules of the game:
How that "kultur" demanded a prize
And her choice was a blood sacrifice.
Then the Kaiser he said: "She shall have it,
Have each Frenchman and Briton and Slav hit!"
Thus he fell. Sound his knell!

† Then a man with a militant brain
Said he'd put the whole project in train,
And his programme as now half-way through
Is important to me as to you,
For combatants are now in the trenches
For "The Right" or "For Might,"—that word clenches:
Sound might's knell! Sound might's knell!

Now the men who are fighting with you
Had got orders to "hack their way through,"
And they did to poor Belgium's cost.
Though we don't count her bravery lost,
For "The Day" it is coming most surely
With the militarists bound securely
Where they fell. Sound their knell!

But King Albert restored to his own
Shall for ever and ever be known
As a man, and disciple of Christ,
Who for righteousness kept the good tryst
Which was: "Come unto me ye who labour:
Ye have fought the good fight for a neighbour,—
Ye shall rest on my breast."

Winnipeg, 1915.

* "Said a German"—Nietzsche and Treitschke.

† "Then a man"—Bernhardi.

FAREWELL

To Contingents to Canadian Expeditionary Force.

GOOD-BYE, my boys, good-bye!
We hope to meet again.
We're all designed to die,—
To that we say Amen:
No matter when or how
The fatal stroke is giv'n,
To destiny we bow
And leave the rest to heav'n.

To fight for right you go:
At peace, I stay at home.
You rush upon the foe:
Life's foe for me will come.
Be this my parting word,—
As through the war you go
Ne'er soil your Sovereign's sword
By one unworthy blow.

With rev'rence treat grey hairs
As tho' they were my own.
Your foemen's sons and heirs
With pity look upon.
Each daughter and sweetheart
To them have due respect.
Like you they had to part:
They're left to war's neglect.

Enough for you to know
The reason why you fight:
You have a soulless foe
Imbued with pride of might.
Remorseless they invade
The earth, which is the Lord's,
To murder man and maid
As time or place affords.

They don't believe in God,
 For God is Love you know:
 They must have blood, more blood,
 No matter whose may flow.
 The Kaiser at their head,
 Though not by people's voice,
 A fallacy has spread:
 "He is the good God's choice"!

Blaspheming m***** he
 A Bismarck laid aside,
 Assumes the Chancellor's key
 To be himself the guide.
 His Hohenzollern blood
 No more can be controlled:
 He calls a murd'ring brood
 To have poor slaves enrolled.

He ever spoke of peace
 Each time he had a chance
 And never meant to fleece
 Wee Belgium or France!
 But lo! They're in his path
 And must be thrust aside:
 The Hohenzollern wrath
 Old treaties can't abide.

His order has gone forth:
 "Kill! rob and mutilate;
 "Destroy all things of worth;
 "Hoch! shew how we can hate;
 "Strike terror to their hearts;
 "Cut *** ***** hands;
 "In science and in arts
 "Shew where each G***** stands."

Another word, dear boys,
 Before we say farewell.
 Your rifles are not toys:
 They are the keys of hell.

Let ev'ry G***** in
Who seeks to take your life:
In that there is no sin,
Defenders in this strife.

"Magnificent blonde b*****"
He'd bring your loved ones woe.
Remember how you shoot
This most destructive foe.
Their G***** culture use
To enrich the Belgian soil.
But, boys, do not abuse
Those who would, peaceful, toil.

Go then! Defend the right
Against the murd'ring horde
Who trusting in their might
Obey their mad war-lord.
Presumptuous P*****, they
Who treat Love, God, with scorn,
Shall dearly rue the day
Yon paper scrap was torn.

Good-bye! my boys, good-bye!
We hope to meet again.
We're all designed to die,—
To that we say amen:
No matter when or how
The fatal stroke is giv'n,
To destiny we bow
And leave the rest to heav'n.

Winnipeg, 1914.

WEDDING SONG

TUNE: "Shouther to Shouther and Awa' We Go"

THE highest honours in this life
Are never won in war-like strife,
But always when as man and wife
A man and maid are wedded O.
There's nocht more precious on this earth,—
Unless its twa, three, at a birth,
Which can't be beat when there's a dearth,—
And there's a dearth now dreaded O.

There's nocht more precious 'neath the skies
Than man o' sense, in maiden's eyes,
That is, when he, to her surprise,
Proposes for a waddin' O.
Of course there's none like she in his:
Her "Yes!" is just the height o' bliss,
Unless it be the bashfu' kiss,—
That now she's no back-haudin' O.

Awa wi' wealth I carena for't:
Mair than eneeugh is only dirt.
The truest wealth is wealth o' heart
Like what is at this waddin' O.
Thou who wert Love personified
Bless, bless this man and bonnie bride
And gie them wealth o' weans beside,—
To bairns this world's behaudin' O.

March, 1915.

WEDDING SONG**PRELUDE**

LOVE's triumphant vict'ry o'er war and hell
In evidence tonight,
A happy pair, and all is well:
Trust God and do the right, trust God and do the right.
And as they face this wondrous world

With all its toil and strife
With one accord they thank the Lord
With marriage lines unfurled, with marriage lines
unfurled.
Their parents satisfied,
With Bridegroom and with Bride
Their friends rejoice with heart and voice
And no one to deride.

SONG

'Tis the glory of our nation wheresoever we are found
To improve on population, make the laws, and till the
ground,
Preach the gospel to each other, so that love may more
abound,
As we go marching along.

CHORUS: Glory! glory to the union,
Glory! glory to the union,
Glory! glory to the union:
The union inspires our song.

This good world would be a wilderness without its sea of
life,
This good world would be monotonous without its love and
strife,
But its majesty and glory come from faithful man and wife
As they go marching along.

There are Fishers on the ocean who can conquer wind and
wave,
There are Fishers on life's ocean nobly trying souls to save,
There are Fishers, we've a notion, can replace the martyred
brave.
As they go marching along.

Marg'ret Duncan and George Fisher have a lengthy
pedigree,
But we needna pass King David or the folk of Galilee,—
Their forefathers fought for freedom, as do namesakes of
the sea,
As they go marching along.

To their fathers and their mothers we must give the credit
 due,
To their sisters and their brothers, who have influenced
 them too,
Praying Him "above all others" help them "paddle their
 canoe,"
As they go marching along.

Written for wedding of George William Fisher and Margaret
Duncan, married at Winnipeg, 12th March, 1915.

MADE IN WINNIPEG

*Lines addressed to George William Fisher on his wedding
day, 12th March, 1915, in handing him copies of wedding
songs written for the occasion.*

THIS Legend: "Made in Winnipeg"
Rings in our ears all day;
But if for evidence you beg
 Just watch school children play.
Thus eyes and ears allay some fears
As to that legend's truth;
While on this day for progeny
Stand beauty and her youth.

This Legend: "Made in Winnipeg"
Means much to those who wed,
For this you know, those men of dough
Have raised the price of bread.
But hark a wee: old R.B.T.
Can beat the baker's pat,—
Just come to me for recipe
When children fill your flat.

This Legend: "Made in Winnipeg"
Will stick to you for life,
Reminding you and your dear Meg
Of where made man and wife.

While on each anniversary
You boil another egg
For number so and so, hurray!
Still "Made in Winnipeg."

This Legend: "Made in Winnipeg"
Refers to many things
Which mostly pass, like bread, alas!
Are used, and then take wings.
But immortality for some
Is reckoned safe and sure,—
Ralph Connor's goods, and those I hum!
Eternal life secure.

This Legend: "Made in Winnipeg"
Refers to these, my songs,
Which now I earnestly would beg
You'd lift with sugar tongs
And gently place them on the fire.
Yet, hold! No, don't do that.
Keep them till you're a great-grandsire
Safe in some auld silk hat:

This Legend: "Made in Winnipeg"
Will still be advertised
Then, and the man who "drew your leg"
Should be well criticized.
When that day comes, with some old chums,
Draw to the chimney lug,
Produce the hat, with this and that,
And judge this auld humbug.

LINES

*Written on seeing the name of a young friend, H. V. Corbett,
on the "Honor List" of entrance examinations, in
Winnipeg Free Press of 15th July, 1915.*

"ANXIOUS time is over"
For the present year.
As we now discover
We had nought to fear:

We have won promotion
From grade eight to nine.
Greatest the commotion
On the "Honor Line."

Proud are we this morning,
Proud are all our friends,
But we must take warning
And make some amends
To our chums and others
Whom we may have vexed,
Teachers, Dads and Mothers,
When we were perplexed.

Changed are our relations
As we honor gain:
Higher obligations
Nobly we'll maintain.
This is meant by Entrance
To a higher class:
Failing this, repentance
And a lower pass.

Culture means refining
Body, soul and mind,
Not by undermining,
Blind folk leading blind,
But by giving others
Help, as from above,
Till all lads are brothers
Meet for lasses' love.

15th July, 1915.



LOVE EVERMORE SHOULD PREVAIL

THIS is no hymnal of hate,
Hate as opposed to humanity:
Hatred A.D. is too late
And enters the sphere of insanity.

This is recording my shame,
Shame for a cultured profanity,
"Kultur" as seed of war's game:
Name that should stand for urbanity.

Heav'n versus hell if my theme,
Good versus ill their aliases:
None of my kindred would dream
Of seeing Heav'n bowled by hell's biases.

War at its worst was named hell,
Now that it's cultured, more hideous.
Sound, ye good people, its knell
And crush out such "kultur" insidious.

Freedom should live all the years,
Helping all peoples in nationhood,
Banishing animal fears,
Encouraging the world to brotherhood.

This is man's noble ideal:
"Banish disease, crime and poverty":
That is the work that is real,
Not confiscating of property.

Love evermore should prevail,
Ev'ry one helping kind Providence:
Hatred can never avail
To solve life's problem,—war the evidence.

1915.

HOCH!

Hoch! for peace-loving Kaiser!
All other folk erazer,
Defender of the Fatherland,
With eye on earth of better brand,
The cultured, world's amazer.

Hoch! for the G***** Vulture
Which feeds on ancient sculpture,
 On humans killed by Zeppelins
 And humans drowned by submarines,
The fruit of G***** culture.

Hoch! hoch for G***** shrewdness
Which, simulating goodness,
 Repayes all hospitality
 By treacherous brutality
And "kultur"-coloured rudeness.

Hoch! hoch for G***** science
And Turkey-red alliance,
 Whose blend of Christianity
 Offends all Lutheranity
By cultured non-compliance.

1915.



THE PLIGHT OF JUSTICE

HUN in his might,
 Justice despising,
Puts her in plight,
 Blindness surprising;
Ravish'd and maimed,
 Fearful her striving.

They who are blamed
 Cease not their riving:
Draw, draw your swords!
 Justice defending.
She is our Lord's,
 On Him depending.

All who are His,
 He our good Leader,
Listen to this,
 He is our pleader,—

"Vengeance is mine,"
"Help me repay it."

"Do not repine,
Come while I say it.
Arm for the strife:
Huns must be humbled.
Lend me thy life:
Might must be crumbled."

1915.

A WAR OF ENDURANCE

TUNE: "*Campbells Are Coming.*"

A war of endurance is on, is on,
A war of endurance is on, is on,
This war of endurance
We'll meet with assurance
And risk our insurance with John, Bull John.
John Bull has a fam'ly beyon', beyon',
John Bull has a fam'ly beyon', beyon;
Across every sea
To his help they will flee
And they'll bid you invaders begone! Begone!

They broke a signed treaty our foe, our foe,
They broke a signed treaty our foe, our foe,
They broke a signed treaty
Nor thought it a pity
To suddenly strike a foul blow, foul blow.
Brute force and brutality free, set free,
Brute force and brutality free, set free,
Their symbol of culture
An inhuman vulture,
Yes, the K*****, the K***** 'tis he, 'tis he.

Our strength and endurance are known, are known,
 Our strength and endurance are known, are known.
 Endurance and patience
 Above alien nations
 On land and on sea have been shewn, been shewn.
 Add these to our faith in a righteous cause,
 Add these to our faith in a righteous cause:
 Our avenging the deed
 That made Belgium bleed
 Shall make G***** take heed how they break all laws.

1915.

**HAME FRAE "WIPERS"**TUNE: "*Oh Susanah.*"

WE'VE just cam hame frae "Wipers"
 Though that's maybe no' the name:
 'Twas where we wiped out vipers
 Of asphyxiating fame.
 Some say it was at Lang'mark
 But for names we dinna care,
 'Twas where we left our comrades
 That the gasses didna spare.

Some of us left a leg or twa,
 Some of us left an arm:
 But some of us that cam awa
 You'd think had taen nae harm.
 But just you listen when we walk
 And then your story tell.
 That we're a'richt was only talk:
 We're fu' o' shot an' shell.

But this is only havering
 And not what I would say:
 Indeed I'm almost wavering
 In asking for my pay.

You said if we would go to war,
Come back, or hit or missed,
We wadna need to travel far
Before that we were kissed.

1915.

A HAPPY BUNCH

TUNE: "*Auld Lang Syne*."

Oh here we are, a happy bunch
Because we are alive,
And though we've lost our scrappy punch
We hope to live and thrive.

CHORUS:

"For auld lang syne, my frien's,
For auld lang syne,
We'll hae a cup o' kindness yet
For the days o' auld lang syne."

We've "done our bit" for our best girls
And for humanity,
For Hun attacks home life imper'ls
Through their insanity.

All you young men who hear us sing
Take heart and join some corps,
And "peace on earth" you'll surely bring
To last for evermore.

1915.

A WAR WAS MADE IN GERMANY

SONG

A war was made in Germany,
The worst that ever was:
The world put out of harmony
Because she broke its laws.
Such laws as "International,"
"Neutrality," and such
She counted "Scraps of paper"
That she really couldn't touch.

She had grown strong and prosperous.
The world was proud of that?
But there were stores of phosphorus
Beneath her cultured hat,
And homicidal tendencies
Too plainly were observed,
Which broke on independencies,
Unsought and undeserved.

She had no grouch with Belgium
Nor quarrel had with France,
But just her rotten cerebrum
Compelled her to advance
And run amuck as conqueror
Of nations 'neath the sun.
Nor did she think they'd hunker her
As soon's they saw the Hun.

Her many years' preparedness
For killing folk wholesale
She'd followed with invariedness
By means without the pale,
Betraying hospitality
No matter when or where:
In high or low locality
Her high paid spies were there.

Bill asked the Belgian government
To let his armies pass.
This was the answer Belgium sent:
"You'll please keep off the grass."
Then they invaded Belgium
And laid the cities waste,
Abused the bairns and women-some!
Humanity disgraced.

They "hacked their way" through Belgium
And tried the same in France,
But here they met their match, "by gum"
And stopped in their advance.
Britannia tipped her boys the wink,
Tom Atkins gave a grin,
He and Tom Bowling took a drink
To toast her health in gin.

Then off Tom Bowling went to sea,
Tom Atkins he "dug in,"
Since when the Germans whoa-back-gee
And battles couldna win.
Whate'er the outcome of this war,
One thing the Huns will see,
Canucks will help their kin, by gar,
Across the mine-strewn sea.

1915.

LINES

*To Mr. and Mrs. James Hunter, Saskatoon,
Christmas 1915.*

With songs and rhymes
In happier times
We've spent a merrier Christmas,
When "peace on earth"
Enhanced our mirth
Nor Santa brought to this pass,—

That Christmas cards
By German bards
 Could not be had for money.
But never mind
Though auld and blind
 *We'll take their place—for fun aye.

So let us raise
A song of praise,
 "Sing to the Lord," be cheerful.
This war of might
Against the right
 Though terrible and fearful
Will rightly end
For He'll defend
 All those who love each other:
For "God is Love,"
And One above
 Is King, our elder Brother.

The Kaiser knave
Can not enslave
 The English speaking races:
His creed of hate
Has sealed his fate
 And Germany disgraces.
Yon Jingo Ring
Defeat will bring:
 In vain they try to break it,—
True British sons
Will smite the Huns
 Each time they try to take it.

(Selah)

*As Hunters after happiness
I pray for your success:
Your little dish
 Of loaves and fish
And shadow won't grow less.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

*Of receipt of flowers from Mr. and Mrs. George Fisher
to Mr. and Mrs. Thomson, Christmas, 1915.*

THIS morning Love exudes
From ev'ry loving thing:
There's fragrance from the woods,
And door-bells sweetly ring;
Flow'rs humbly bow their heads
In sweet humility
For they have left their beds
To bloom for you and me.

(Selah)

The blinking stars look down
To see what they can see.
On hateful things they frown
As seen in Germany,
For there some creeds resound
Of antichristian make.
Faith, Hope, and Hate abound
All laws of Love to break:
Faith in blasphemous words,
Hope, that might will prevail;
Hate, "hacking through" with swords.
But Kaiser's swords shall fail,
For keener swords flash forth
Encircling freedom's foes:
On East, West, South and North
Love's wrath around them flows.

(Selah)

Apart from German blot
On the beatitudes,
From Christian world of thought
This morning Love exudes,
And Christmas cards galore
Have travelled miles and miles

In haste by sea and shore
To wreath the world in smiles,
While gifts of ev'ry kind,
As Shepherds thought they should,
Give healing to the mind
And further brotherhood.

(Selah)

But now I maun wish ye a happy New Year,
Wi' kind friens aroun' ye to help banish fear,
For times hae been strenuous, on that we'll agree,
But there's better time comin' for you and for me.

THE MYSTERY OF LOVE AND HATE

THE mystery of love and hate
Has deepened in the world of late:
For hate seems German culture's goal
And so she plays the murd'rer's role
Of treach'ry most iniquitous;
Nor strikes alone at French and us
But sinks ship-loads of innocents;
Nor even asks ship-load's contents
Ere sending the torpedo home
That sends the ship beneath the foam.
And love! Love won't retaliate
By sending Huns to meet their fate
But rescues ev'n the enemy
In very act of venom.

1915.

TO LESLIE MONTGOMERY

On the Firing Line.

AND are you on the firing line?
Surrounding freedom's foes,
Defending yours and me and mine
From Kaiser's cultured blows.

No kingly servant is yon Hun
To kindly German folk,
But antichrist, "my will be done,"
He says, and means no joke.

Go, kill the Kaiser and his brood:
They're wolves in God's own world.
They shed again the Shepherd's blood
And His sheep are imper'led.
Insanely rush the German hordes
North, South, and East and West:
No outlet your corral affords.
Lasso the lordly pest.

Draw closer 'round the beasts of prey:
Pick out the guilty ones
Who drank and toasted "To the day"
When they'd unleash the Huns.
Destroy the Hohenzollern tribe,
Whose culture is to kill
With horrors none would dare describe.
Such is their cultured skill.

P.S.—"You'll a' come merry hame some nicht
You'll a' come merry hame,
And when you meet this poetry man
You'll break his rumple bane."

1915.



RED RIVERS

THERE is a river in the West
That's Red, Red, Red.
The part of it that I loe best
Is Red, Red, Red.
From Winnipeg down to the lake
Tradition speaks without a break
Of men who for Auld Scotland's sake
Had bled, bled, bled.

A hundred years had come and gane
 Since then, then, then;
 Canadian Scots hae brawn and brain
 Like then, then, then.
 Auld Scotland threatened by the Hun
 Lights heather heaps on ev'ry dun,
 Her war-pipes skirlin' out like fun
 For men, men, men.

Aff gaed the breeks, on gaed the kilt
 Sae free, free, free;
 A bite and begnet in the belt,
 They're free, free, free.
 'Tis miles and miles to Langemarck
 But see them charge frae out the dark:
 Ten foes to one lie cold and stark,
 Waes me, me, me.

Red River here, Red rivers there
 Of blood, blood, blood;
 Men killed! in world wi' none to spare,
 Lost blood, blood, blood?
 Nay, from the blood so freely spilled
 And graves of num'rous heroes killed,
 The righteousness to be fulfilled
 Will bud, bud, bud.

1915.

LINES

*To R. Montgomery, Christmas 1915, acknowledging
 receipt of box of fish.*

Who was it thought that a box of fish
 Meant a good lot as a Christmas wish,—
 Brought us to mind of an inland sea
 Famous for Fishers of Galilee?
 Who but a brother of Him who said:
 Throw in the net men and "be not afraid";
 Who but a Scottish Montgomerie
 Could think of some fish for old R.B.T.?

Knowing for sure prohibition was nigh,
And fish was the stuff to make R.B.T. dry!
"Scotsmen nae humour"! the man who said that
Hadna much humour beneath his ain hat!
But a' jokes aside, mony thanks for the fish.
May you never want ane is our prayer and wish,
And may you and a' yours hae a happy New Year—
And for ane wi' sic gumption I've naething to fear.

Now I'll draw the line about guid men and fishes
And tackle the work, for I'm washin' the dishes!

LETTER

*To Mr. and Mrs. George Fisher, 21st January, 1916, the
forty-second anniversary of the wedding of
Mr. and Mrs. Thomson.*

SOME thanks are due from me to you
For kind consideration
In sending flowers to mark the hours
Of wedding celebration.
We spent the day as guess you may
In quiet reminiscency:
How, long ago, I wasna slow
In claiming leniency
While I pursued, as young men should,
The one who won my fancy,
And truth to tell, she knows full well,
Was led a bonnie dance aye.
But here and there no matter where,
I wasna far behind her,
Till, happy hour, in Lithgow's bower
One day I chanced to find her
And there and then I asked her "When?"
Put on the ring and kissed her.

For which great day I thankful pray
Because I hadna missed her:

For she has been a very Queen
 Beyond my right deserving,
 A faithful wife through married life,
 Who never thought of swerving
 By chance or fate through trials great,—
 Came always out victorious,
 Till now you see with R.B.T.
 She thinks our life was glorious.
 Our children, eight, all good and great,
 But one, alas, ascended,
 Have been our pride, 'tis not denied,
 And need not be defended.
 I'll tell you why: to multiply,
 The first consideration
 In Scripture's rolls, His wish for souls
 And world for preparation.

But I maun stop or you will drop
 For weariness in reading,
 Forbye my dear don't think me queer,
 My time is up for feeding!
 Yet still again I'll say Amen
 To incarnationed wishes
 Expressed in flowers: the pleasure's ours.
 But I maun wash my dishes.

With love from Mrs. Thomson,
 Yours faithfully,
 R. B. THOMSON.

LETTER

*To Mr. and Mrs. William Tennent, January 1916, on learning
 that their son John had been wounded in
 action "Somewhere in France."*

A wee bit note
 To clear my throat
 Of yon peculiar feeling
 Wrought by the heart
 When cabled dart
 Another's woe's revealing.

The S.O.S.
May often bless
And be the sender's saving:
Those who receive
Must too believe
Emergent call worth braving.

And so, dear souls,
When tempest rolls,
Yourself and son far parted,
Be pleased to hear
This word o' cheer:
Be not too much down-hearted.

A mother's love
Like His above
Is surely most amazing:
Can never freeze
Can cross the seas
In spite of storms hair-raising.

Come! Comfort pree
Frae R.B.T.:
He and his wife's been through it.
More faith and love
Ask from above
And surely He'll renew it.

With kindest regards,
Yours faithfully,
R. B. THOMSON.

—+—

LETTER

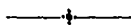
*To Pte. Leslie Montgomery, No. 21036, 1 Coy., 43rd Battalion,
C. E. F., 11th February, 1916.*

YOUR screed of 18th ultimo
Escaped the submarines you know
And told us that the battle line

Was "up to Dick," the trenches fine,
The air salubrious and nice,
The floor of trench as smooth as ice,
And with your carpet slippers on
You danced two-step to bagpipe's drone,
And sometimes told the Alleman
To come and join as soon's he can
And have a new-come cigarette,—
And other things that I forget.

But my imagination's bright
And pictures firing line alright
With nothing very much to do
But watch and wait in your canoe.—
Oh! hang it all, I've shewn my hand,
For why canoe in your dry land?—
Or warmly tucked in truckle bed
With safety sand-bags overhead.—
Well there again I've dropped a stitch
In picturing your well-made ditch.—
And sound asleep I hear you snore
Above the sound of battles roar.—
Dash't Leslie, that one is too thin,
How dare you snore with noncoms in?—
But, tempus fugit, time will pass,
And you, relieved, creep up the grass,
The lawn of yonder great chateau
Whose lady bright will welcome you,
Instruct the butler how to treat
The men who never knew defeat:—
First to the marble, gilt-edged bath,
Then to the dressing-room to swathe
In finest underwear of silk,
And then a cup of wine and milk.
Escorted to the dining hall—
By George! I heard that heifer bawl
As you crept in to share its bed
Or sleep in hay-loft overhead,
Where you had scarcely closed an e'e
When hark! there sounds the reveille.

Well Leslie, this is just a joke:
You get the news from your ain folk.
You're not to call this poetry, mind,
Or I will think you are unkind,
For I've produced no poetry yet
Worthy the name: but do not fret,—
I'm like a wife who had no weans
But said she always used the means.



LETTER

*To Lieut. (Doctor) Thomas Campbell, R.M.C., British
Saloniki Expeditionary Force, 28th February, 1916.*

I canna speak or read the Greek
Or ev'n the Gaelic lingo,
But Pegasus, that winged freak,
Horse-talk may have, by jingo;
And as he flies among the skies
With Zeppelins to amble,
Some wireless lies he may surprise
And tell't to Doctor Campbell.
For that same Doc. some talks can talk,—
Converses well with asses.
Forbye good lack, or is't alack?
Can flirt wi' foreign lasses.
So he'll mak out, I've got nae doubt,
What Pegasus may tell him.
So, Peg, get up, nae spur or whup
Till ye see what befell him.
But you insist he's greatly missed
Where'er he used to haunt aye,
Though we've John Frost, a whiter ghost
But by no means sae canfie.

(Selah).

Doc., you confess you get "the press"
Frae some of our braw lasses;
It's sane and sanitariness!
All letters aye surpasses?
As their reward could you afford
The vote, forsooth, to women?
For shame, dear Doc. Hide 'neath your cloak:
For sure you know they're human.
If you are glad, or not too sad,
Please say and be forgiven,
If but to find some peace of mind
And hae a taste o' heaven.—
Bilingual schools! What awful fools
Conservatives have been, man?
Of tongues on earth there is nae dearth
And Roblin "was the frien," man:
Canadian, the new Balkan,
Where English is na taught man.
The battle's on: to sit upon
This thing with evil fraught man.

A great prohibitory law
Will pass, by referendum,
Without a flaw, best ere we saw
For man and his addendum.
What do I mean? Where is your bean?
His wife, and weans, when added,
Will find the bawbees in his jean
Which, formerly, pubs wadded.
But I maun stop for fear you drop
When laughing at this grumphy
Wha just should squeak, or only speak,—
But that would show the sumphy.
Yet here's my hand, I'll let it stand:
Ye get sae mony letters,
A screed like this won't come amiss
'Mong full grown hogs, my betters.

LETTER

*To Leslie Montgomery on active service with C. E. F.,
20th May, 1916.*

A word frae winsome Winnipeg
To tell ye how she's doing.
Her boots go half way up her leg,
Short petticoats pursuing.
Indeed, to tell the truth, dear boys,
Her youth she seems renewing,
Preparing for returning joys,
When you come hame awooing.

Her virtue I do not impugn:
I'm no calumniator
And though she wears lang leggit shoon
She's white as is her gaiter.
For I was never colour blind
Like very many folk, Sir,
And I can see when I've a mind:
She's started wearing socks, Sir.

I've quite forgot, the truth to tell,
What should be in this letter.
Oh! cleanliness, ye ken yoursel',
Is next to something better;
And so the folk are cleaning up.
Clean folk maun hae clean dwelling,
But men folk think it bitter cup,—
This annual test—by smelling.

As for mysel' I hae my pairs:
The winter's dirt in basement
Maun a' be sent to a' the airts
To neighbour folk's amazement.
John Frost's a beggar here-awa.
Of that you need nae telling,
And aff and on he gies a blaw,
Coal purchases compelling.

And so you see you're a' weel aff
In cozy fire-proof trenches!
And our dire plight maun mak ye laugh
And bless our clean-up wenches.
But bide a wee till you come hame:
Your laughter you will stifle;
Your choring roun' the house you'll blame
As waur than nursing rifle.



LINES

*On reading the account of the golden wedding of ex-Bailie
and Mrs. W. F. Stewart, in "Leith Burghs Pilot"
of 16th September, 1916.*

Now here's a life to emulate
From boyhood up to man's estate,
And thence to wedding's golden gate,
To beckon in
Not the proud friends, or rich, or great,
But maimed and blin'.

See the old hero and sweet wife,
Dear mates of fifty years of life,
Though friends and family are rife,
Unselfish still,
Welcome from "Bill the Butcher's" knife
Those hard to kill.

(Selah).

In youth he tackled "first of arts,"
And helped nae doubt to kill the marts,
And herded kye in outside parts,
As farmer's boy.
For aught I ken he stirred some hearts
Milk-maids' wi' joy.

Frae pig pen to a paper mill
Where he could get the thing called skill
Preparing pulp to 'bide the quill,
He meant to drive:
Hop, step and jump, he's on the stuil
From which he'll thrive.

Co-operation was his pride:
He tried it wi' his bonnie bride,
Replenishing, they multiplied—
He aye says marry—
And poverty ance mair defied
As secretary.

Anither step, he's manager.
He had to be't to pleasure her:
For she wad look sae weel in fur,
So what's the use;
He had to be't without demur
Or leave the house.

But fareweel sune to Penicuik:
The wholesale folk gied him a look
And wad hae him by hook or crook
To start in Leith.
Since when his life wad fill a book
You'd fa' beneath.

Yes! here's a life to emulate
From boyhood up to man's estate,
And thence to Golden Wedding's gate,
To beckon in
Not the proud friends, or rich, or great,
But maimed and blin'.

To. Mr. and Mrs. George Fisher,
8th November, 1916.

FAREWELL TO THE LADSTUNE: "*Bonnie Dundee*."

FAREWELL to the lads who laid down tools of trade.
Of a change to good works they were never afraid,
And the good work at present they've chosen to do
Is to fight for true freedom for me and for you.
For such tyrants as Kaisers they've gotten no use:
Of their own divine rights they will stand no abuse,
And whatever they tackle before they come home
'Tis to free folk from slav'ry of Hun Kaiserdom.

Farewell to the lads who laid down tools of trade,
E'en the pen and the peevy, the plow and the spade.
They have nobly responded to call of distress
And in off'ring their bodies save souls and no less.
Then hurrah! for our lads and hurrah! for our land
And hurrah! for the heroes that Huns cannot stand.
In peaceful pursuits or in facing life's foes
All Canadians are fearless, each Hun surely knows.

Farewell to the lads who laid down tools of trade
And left father or mother or wife or sweet maid.
They have ris'n to the height of man's glory indeed,
Who for kin, King and country are willing to bleed.
Sudden death to oppressors whoe'er they may be:
To meet such barbarians our lads cross the sea.
Deep, deep in their hearts there's such scorn for the foe
That the force of their wrath is in every blow.

Farewell to the lads who laid down tools of trade
To avenge their old pals now in foreign soil laid,
Ev'ry man an avenger, for cruelty done
In the name of the killer, the king of the Hun.
Great God, whom we aid in this war against wrong,
Bring back our dear lads singing true victors' song,
And Thine be the glory, though theirs be the pain,
And we'll praise Thee forever and ever, Amen.

DECORATION DAY

AGAIN on Decoration Day
Let us in all humility
Lay on our hearts and minds this scroll:
They died for freedom of the soul.

Our well beloved, whose appetite
For deeds of daring in the right
Hath brought them immortality
Though lost to us just for a wee.

Lay laurel leaves upon the graves
Of those who never could be slaves:
They gave their lives for you and me
Because they wished us to be free.

The blunders of some nations are
That they persist on each to war,
Invading others' home or land
To have and hold by mailed hand.

Would that all nations realized
How dear each native land is prized:
That soul of soil in all of us
Can not be killed by blunderbuss:

All nations of the world set free
To work for each more peacefully,
With love instead of hate be bound,
And cultivating goodness, found.

Ambitious nations still there are
That will persist in waging war
Not "for the right" in many spheres
But to possess what isn't theirs.

Again on Decoration Day
Let us in all humility
Lay on our hearts and minds this scroll:
They died for freedom of the soul.

1916.

FROM KAISER TO CARL

FROM Kaiser to carl—
The world supposes—
The whole German people
Have caught Treitschkenosis!
A hoggish disease:
They could eat the whole world
Without saying, if you please,
As their tales have unfurled.

From Kaiser to carl
All goodness is banished:
Christ-likeness from all
Has apparently vanished.
Their pulpits are places
To preach frightfulness,
And their clergy disgraces
Our Lord's righteousness.

From Kaiser to carl
The worse road have chosen
Of two, good and evil.
Their hearts are quite frozen,
And heaven and hell
Have no place in their creed:
But as war is the latter
They have got there indeed.

From Kaiser to carl,—
Folly to divide
The state from the people:
No bridegroom and bride
But divine right of kings,—
Acknowledged by all
Is the evil that brings
To the Germans their fall.

From Kaiser to carl:
 "My order obey
 Or else I will crush you
 On that very day":
 And meekly as slaves
 They do what is wrong,
 And meet ignoble graves
 Just because he felt strong.

1916.



DOUGAL

HEY Dougal! Ho Dougal!
 Step awa to drum and bugle
 Till the pipes begin to skirl:
 Then your heart begins to birl;
 Heads gang up and plaids unfurl,—
 Challenge to the foe Dougal.

Hey Dougal! Ho Dougal!
 To my breast you'll kindly snuggle
 When the cruel war is over:
 Hame-ward rush and there discover
 Mother, wife or girlie lover,—
 Always true to you Dougal.

Hey Dougal! Ho Dougal!
 Wives and sweethearts a' sae frugal
 Save themselves for your hame-comin':
 Tender bairnies keep them hummin'
 Though the zeps above keep bummin',—
 We'll depend on you Dougal.

1916.

LINES

*To Leslie and Donald Montgomery, and others,
on active service.*

BELIEVE me, dear boys, 'tis no infliction
To wave my hand:
Such quaint Canadian benediction
You'll understand;
Although to you 'tis more baptismal
Thus sprinkling ink
Which may be dry but never dismal
I daur to think.
Forbye it saves from dereliction
Baith me and you,
Tho' maybe no sae guid for friction
As "mountain dew."

Weel, "war is hell," there's no denying,
And tries the nerves:
But there! Ye hae the Kaiser frying
As he deserves.
He's wriggling sair at your guid cooking,
The innocent!
And canna thole Liebknecht's rebuking
And won't repent.
But woe awaits his hellish legions
Ere peace he had!
Out from among these Christian regions
Purge Prince and Dad.

LINES

*Written to Leslie Montgomery, on Active Service with
C. E. F. in France, reporting a certain wedding
in Westminster Church, Winnipeg.*

OH! Christie-Feir (Columbus) have you heard the awfu'
news?

The Doctor's lost a dochter and his wife's re-donned the
trews.

The folk were a' invited and they filled Westminster pews,
And we saw the young folk married We'nesday morning.

CHORUS:

Oh my! It's awful to be dry!

To toast the bride and groom beside without the scotch
or rye:

But here's to Feir and Mrs.—they'll happy be through life
If they don't forget the kisses in the morning.

The bride was dressed in falderals, ye never saw the like;
The bridegroom looked as proud as punch but wished we a'
wad hike;

So when the knot was fastened, we, like bumbees frae a
byke,

Flew to see the bridescake slaughtered We'nesday
morning.

Down flashed the Christie claymore while we a' stood by
wi' Feir:

The frichtsme deed was ended but the thrill made us feel
queer.

For why? The heart's emotions that sic signs and symbols
steer

Aye wi' Feir we'll feel effects o't mony a morning.

The demonstration ended, then the mother wept wi' joy,
And, silent, started prayin' that the first might be a boy,
For war-time brings the warning: deeds and pray'rs we
must employ

So we won't be short of soldiers some fine morning.

HE'S HOME AGAIN MY BONNIE LAD

He's home again, my bonnie lad,
Frae far ayont the sea.
To all intents and purposes
He died for you and me:
But though his body's broken sair,
His soul is sound and free,
And what remains of him is mair
Than ever dear to me.

CHORUS:

But he's home again, my bonnie lad,
Frae far ayont the sea.
To all intents and purposes
He died for you and me.

He heard the shrieks of Belgium;
He heard the call of France;
Britannia waved on him to come
And stay the Huns' advance.
He threw aside his tools of trade,
Rushed to the meeting place,
In soldier's gear was soon arrayed
That he would ne'er disgrace.

1916

**ALL HAIL YE LOVING MOTHERS**

ALL hail! Ye loving mothers
Who faithfu' play life's game:
And pain at parting smothers
When sons maun leave their hame.
Life's fecht maun aye be fought
And your sons are no' to blame
If a vict'ry's dearly bought
Ere they a' come hame;

Ere they a' come hame,
Ere they a' come hame,
If a vict'ry's dearly bought
Ere they a' come hame.

In name of cruel culture
A war had been the aim:
O'er Belgium flew the vulture
And shrieked a Kaiser's shame.
Could your sons see the sight,
Stay at home and share the blame?
No! By heav'n they're in the fight
Till the Huns they tame;
Till the Huns they tame,
Till the Huns they tame.
No! By heav'n they're in the fight
Till the Huns they tame.

1916.



GOOD-BYE

TUNE: "*Highland Mary*."

FOR men we pray
Who march away
All fear of battle scorning.
They've nought to say
But "Now's the Day"
For freedom's foes o'eturning.
Their faces shine
With light divine,
Surpassing king's adorning,
By good inspired,—
Not hatred fired
As in our foe's hymned warning.

Good-bye brave souls!
Your company rolls
 May read: killed, wounded, missing,
But by and by
The rolls on high
 Will prove you earned the blessing.
Roll on The Day
When peace and play
 Shall find all nations brothers;
And roaring guns
Each nation shuns
 For loving voice of mothers.

1916.

**LINES**

*To Capt. (Dr.) Harry J. Watson, C.A.M.C., Bramshott,
England, 15th December, 1916.*

You are now in the land where the cream-de-la-cream
Of humanity finds its abode;
Where the old aristocracy's only a dream
 And the new is now fighting for God;
Where the taint of the tyrant is banished for aye,
 And democracy standeth for love,
And a peace-loving nation in battle array,
 Stands with nations oppressed, hand and glove.

You are now in the land where the cream-de-la-cream
 Of humanity finds its abode,
Because you and your patients inherit the stream
 That responds to the source whence it flowed.
Be it blood, brawn or brain that has taken control
 You are there with what are in demand:
High loyalty, courage, high hopes and high soul,
 For the people, the King and Old Land.

MEMORIAL

*of Canadian Scottish who fell at Langemarck
in April 1915.*

Joy and sorrow, pride and pain
Fill our souls and hearts again.
Hie thee, songlet, cross the waves,
Echo 'round our heroes' graves:
Geddes, Jamieson and Ross,
Silent, each 'neath little cross.
Silent? Nay they speak again:
"We lie here that Love may reign."
Why they lived and why they died
This we tell with honest pride:
They had lived to do the right;
Died to curb unrighteous might;
Died with many of their men,—
Comrades still, they live again.

1916.

***THE CANADIAN SCOTTISH AT LANGEMARCK**

23rd April, 1915.

THE Lord of Hosts most gloriously
Defeated death and hell,
And Satan for a thousand years
Retired into his cell.

The tempter tried another tribe,
Saw Hohenzollern Prince,
Who said: "Mine friend I'll take thy bribe,
The world, and never wince."

But when "The Day" arrived forsooth,
And Belgium was betrayed,
Spontaneously Canadian youth
Went off to Britain's aid:

For Britain's honour was at stake;
Britannia's sons were brave;
A treaty she could never break;—
No Briton be a slave.

The twenty-third of April must
Always be kept to shine,
For on that day a mighty trust
Fell on Canadian line.

The Germans had blown on the French
Asphyxiating gas
That made our Allies leave the trench
And let the Germans pass.

The gas had done its work too well,
Disorganized those caught,
And clenched the term that "war is hell"
And brings good men to naught.

Canadian Scottish, in reserve,
Got orders at Ypres,
"Fall in and march to Langemarck
Some of our guns to free."

Next morning many a second birth:
"Fix bayonets Kilties, march!
Fling all encumbrances to earth;
Canadian Scottish, charge!"

Note well results: retaken guns;
"The situation saved";
Demoralized the German Huns;
Their best battalions braved.

The Kilties now can count their loss:
Their Captains all have died,—
Brave Geddes, Jamieson and Ross,
And Merriott,—glorified;
With many men as brave as they
Now lying by their side,
Brave leaders and brave led that day,—
Comrades on other side.

1916.

*The 16th Battalion.

ANSWER TO AN INVITATION TO SUPPER*At Westminster Church*

"THE world, the flesh and the devil,"
All whisper: "You really should go,"
But I've managed to conquer the evil
And answer, with thanks to you, No.

P.S. and N.B. and—haud on man!
I've pondered on't since I wrote nay:
Prepare ye, for me, wi' a scone man,
For I'll come and haud Saint Andrew's Day.
1916.

**LETTER***To Signaller Roy Carruthers, 19th December, 1916.*

Dear Roy,

I do not send you chocolate
But love,—true antidote for hate.

For love is easy to digest
Though chocolate you may love best.

And yet you may need chocolate
To fortify 'gainst German hate.

Nay! 'tis not German hate you fear
So much as dearth of love out here.

So there! so long as I can write
To you I'll lovingly indite.

But last, not least, though it looks queer
This is to wish, A Guid New Year!

R. B. THOMSON.

WHEN THE BOYS COME HOME

WHEN the war is over and the boys come home
And the Huns discover it is lost and won
There will be some weeping, there will be some fun:
There will be some more rejoicing when the boys come
home.

CHORUS:

When the boys come home, when the boys come home
There will be some more rejoicing when the boys come
home.

When the Germans thundered over Belgian soil
And their captains plundered and behaved so vile
It aroused the British, and in rank and file
They prepared themselves for battle in the dear old Isle.

Britain's sons and daughters far across the sea
Saw the many matters that ought not to be,
And they kissed each other, and the boys set free
To give battle to the Germans on that righteous plea.

With the joy-bells ringing over land and sea
And the good ships bringing joy to you and me
There's the maple clinging to the emblems three,
E'en the shamrock, rose and thistle, to eternity.

1916.

CHRISTMAS CARD, 1916

*Written for, and mailed to Mr. and Mrs. James Hunter,
Saskatoon, Sask.*

'Tis Christmas and I wish ye weel
As ower the hills o' time ye speel:
A bonnie lass and cantie chiel,
I like ye baith.
May Christmas greetings, 'roun' ye feel
Like food and claith.

(Selah)

Can universal peace be bred
On French or Belgian gory bed?
Or good-will come till all be dead
Who caused the war?
Such anti-christian style, so dread,
We maun deplore.

The Christian way is still the best,
And love instead of hate is blest:
So surely it will stand the test,
Or I'm at sea.
But hoots! I'm haverin' and maun rest.

Yours, R.B.T.

221ST OVERSEAS BATTALION

(Bull Dogs)

"GROWL, grip but never let go,"
Wild beasts we tackle aye so.
Brothers have corralled the Bosches already,
Make for their noses now, steady boys, steady.
Down on their knees we must have them ere long:
Bull dogs are faithful and strong,

Gr-r-r-r- Gr- r-r-r,

Gr-r-r-r- Gr- r-r-r.

"Growl, grip but never let go":

Have them and hold them and send them below.

The first line of the above was written in competition, by Mr. Thomson, during the Great War, as a slogan for the 221st Battalion (Bull Dogs), Lt.-Col. L. McMeans, O.C.

THE DEACONS' COURT SUPPER

THE Deacons' Court of Westminster invited us to dine:
The time was near St. Andrew's Day and we thought that
divine.

We gathered in our hundreds and the tables they looked fine,
And the women folk as usual did the serving.

But oh! my! the Deacons they were sly:

The good time we expected took financial turns, so dry,—
To wipe out a deficit was a' the evening's cry,

And the arguments and figures were un-nerving.

They flaunted riches in the face of men who had been
robbed:

Some one had gi'en five hundred bucks—the name must not
be probed.

Some others would, or could or should give hundreds, or be
mobbed,

For Westminster leads the kirks or goes in mourning.

But oh! my! it was an awfu' cry:

"For pure up-keep of thirsty sheep the pastures wad go dry:

Give five-and-twenty hundred before the year goes by,"—

Or behold we're up before the world's scorning.

The well known speakers of the kirk came quite prepared to
spout,

But as the scheme unfolded they were somewhat put about,
And honestly confessed that they for once were put to rout,

For the men who wanted money gave no warning.

But oh! my! they had my sympath-eye (?)
 As one and all they tried a fall, with mony a sough and sigh,
 Though all were optimistic, inviting us to try
 Just to bring the cash that's wanted,—Sunday morning.

1916.

**JINGO RING****SCHOOL SONG**

O here we go by Jingo Ring, by Jingo Ring, by Jingo Ring,
 O here we go by Jingo Ring, and give our chums "good
 morning!"
 We daily sing God save the King, God save the King, God
 save the King,
 We daily sing God save the King, and give his foes good
 warning.

The German jingoes had their joke, they had their joke, they
 had their joke,
 The German jingoes had their joke and for "The Day"
 were yearning.
 God save us from the tyrant yoke, the tyrant yoke, the
 tyrant yoke,
 God save us from the tyrant yoke that others' necks keeps
 burning.

Some things we'd like to understand: Have only Huns a
 Fatherland?
 May Belgians, Serbs and Frenchmen grand defend their
 nations' borders?
 Or shall a Kaiser and his knaves o'erwhelm the earth with
 murd'ring braves?
 Think they to make all others slaves obedient to his
 orders?

1916.

THE GERMAN FOOLS

THE German fools have broken rules
Of ev'ry kind and country:
Drank to "The Day" they'd start a fray
To gain pow'r for their gentry.

For forty years it now appears
The Kaiser courts perdition:
He knew that love that's from above
Would spurn his low ambition.

To frightfulness not rightfulness
He gave his kingly blessing:
And Belgian maid was sore afraid,
He brutally transgressing.

To stay advance through lovely France
And bide by Belgian treaty,
Britannia's arms allayed alarms
That he should France defeat aye.

Then Kaiser he came down from Kiel
To blow us out the water,
But met with *she helps rule the sea
Britannia's youngest daughter.

The bloated ass let off some gas
Enough to fright the Frenchmen:
Canadian cubs though to the hubs
Saved guns in spite of stench then.

Allies' corral doth now appal
That god-almighty-Kaiser:
And he will rue not I and you,
Hurrah! when won's The Day, Sir.

1916.

*Youngest daughter—Australia.

LINES*To Leslie Montgomery on hearing of his betrothal.*

CONGRATULATIONS loud and long,
 To bear them a' ye maun be strong:
 They come frae sic a happy throng
 Unanimous the forum.
 Your mother, Leslie's unco pleased,
 Duncan, Archie, Jim and Flossie,—
 A' your friens are unco pleased
 And mak a cheerfu' quorum.
 "Montgomery-Carson": on "The Day"
 We hear the news, we'll cry hurray!
 And earnestly we'll toast and say:
 "Montomeries! Here's to more-o'-'em."

**SAL O. NIKI***Lines to Doctor Thomas Campbell with B.E.F.*

How lonely must the Balkans be
 Since Captain Campbell left?
 And as for Sal O. Niki, she
 Has sadly been bereft.
 "O send him back," poor Sal O. sings,
 "O send him back to me:
 He is the only man who brings
 Sweet heart's salubritie."

"I know he's dear to more than mine:
 I've heard of Headinglie
 Where he has more than eight or nine
 To welcome him to tea.
 Then after tea, the dance, oh my!
 To which he hums the tune,
 That wierd and ancient melody
 To dance, they call The Spoon."

SOUL OF IRELAND

If the soul of old Ireland looked down from its higher land
And would speak to the people, what think you 'twould
say?

Sure 'twould bless them, caress them, and try to impress
them

With their duty, as children, to love, watch and pray;
And would tell them, their fightin' they take such delight in
Would but make them unhappy each Saint Patrick's Day:
To give over, sow clover, and each be a lover
Of all born on the old sod, whate'er Huns might say.

Sure the soul of old Ireland prefers not a fire-brand
Who would sow divers doctrines to stir up more strife.
They who rouse up such evil are sons of the "deevil"
And would serve him for purposes evil, though rife.
Your upbringing, my children, has been most bewilderin':
Turn away from your enemy, human pretense,
And be lovingly royal to sons just as loyal,
Should the time ever come for old Ireland's defence.

Why should Ireland's dear bosom be tortured and gruesome
When for each of her children a shamrock grows there?
She more surely is mother of lover and brother
Than the moon of the heavens or stork of the air.
All be true to dear Ireland, come out of the mire-land
Where for ages insane ones have kept you apart:
Put your arm round your neighbour, join with him to labour
For the good of old Ireland and health of your heart.

1916.

BREEZY

THE trees on Ethelbert are bare:
Their leaves go scurrying everywhere,
Now east, now west, now north, now south
To foil incinerator's mouth.
Unlike those winds, and leaves from trees,

Came in a night another breeze,
 Which, whirling 'round our Empire broad,
 Inspired our youth to work for God
 And sent them swiftly over seas
 To fight for Righteousness' Trustees.
 For who, if not Britannia's sons,
 Could crush the hell-bound Kaiser's Huns
 And save a world from cultured brutes
 Who'd tear up freedom by the roots?

October 1916.



THE WORLD, THE FLESH AND THE DEVIL

To - - - -

THAT the world, the flesh and the devil should worry you
 Isn't surprising: they all want to bury you.
 Fretting and grumbling most surely will hurry you
 Into your grave. Take their warning.

This beautiful world you don't seem to appreciate.
 Smiling she tells you how little you can create:
 Blushing each morn as she hears you deplore your fate,—
 Having to rise ev'ry morning.

The flesh in its pride spurns your way of abusing it,
 Asks ev'ry day to take how you're using it,
 Seeks but your smiles and your songs while amusing it,
 Its tenant, the soul, how adorning?

The devil, so pleased that you've gotten a use for him,
 Waves the white flag and you sign up a truce for him:
 No "get thee behind me," there, there's a wee house for
 him,—

Still "wee scraps o' paper" aye scorning.

1916.

ST. VALENTINE'S DAY

14th February, 1917.

To my dear wife, this valentine,
With twa-three words of auld lang syne:
Ye'll mind when I was in despair,
And for yoursel' my "heart was sair"?

In eighteen seventy A.D.
You said you were too auld for me!
In eighteen sev'nty-four we're wed,—
And no regretful word's been said.

Five sons, three dochters, in our fold
Was no so bad for one so old!
And while this day you're sev'nty-three
You'll be much older still you see:

For ere we twa lay down our lives
Jack, Jim and Bill maun a' hae wives;—
I near forgot our Scotch Canuck
But hope that she will hae guid luck.

For though we've thirteen grandchildren
The country needs some mair guid men:
And we have reason, yes indeed,
To think there's not a better breed.

For though in eighty-four we came
To Canada to make our hame
And train our young in first of arts,
We found the farm won not their hearts:

But culture of another kind
Enticed the soul and lured the mind;
For men, instead of mud, they craved,—
Now can we say they misbehaved?

Well, maybe no, but lawyers three
Seem plenty law for you and me.
Now patience! just another line:
Will you still be my Valentine?

Affectionately,

ROBIN.

VALENTINE

Copies sent to soldiers, Roy Carruthers, Leslie Montgomery, Alex. Stewart, and James Haddow, with suitable comic drawing on each, the first two syllables of the second verse having been for the respective soldiers,—“So, Roy”; “Leslie”; “Alex”; “Dear Jim”; respectively

Off, off you go, wee Valentine!
Defy the zep and submarine
That value you no' worth a preen
Or “scrap of paper,”
Whereas your spirit shines serene
Through comic caper.

So, Roy, I'm maybe no far wrang,—
Although I ken ye may be thrang—
Your face this morning's no sae lang
As 'twas yestreen?
Some cares hae lost their trails amang
This valentine.

February 1917.

LINES

*To Mr. and Mrs. George Fisher, Christmas 1916,
acknowledging receipt of gift.*

I'm glow'ring at the bonnie bush
You kindly sent to “Maw,”
And whiles I gie't a wee bit push
To see if apples fa'.
But fient a ane has fallen yet
A creeping thing could lift:
But my! oh my! can I forget
The way of Adam's gift?

Why should I think of Paradise
While viewing yon wee tree?
Because, forsooth its coming cries:
Here's Christianitie;
And loving gifts from loving hands,
From Adam's fauts set free,
Obedient to His high commands.
In reciprocitie,

Yours faithfully,
R. B. THOMSON.



**JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY,
IN MEMORIAM**

SWEET Poet's breath
Restored by death
To Him who gave it, really
Shall still be ours
To inspire flow'rs
Of thought in childhood, freely.

This Poet's soul
Remaineth whole
For ever and for ever,
Yet here and there,
Yea, everywhere,
A flow'r from it will sever.

But stand aloof!
Behold the proof:
James Whitcomb Riley, Poet,
Sings like a bird
Through ev'ry word,
And lo! the children know it.

MERRY ANDREW

(SONG)

I am a merry Andrew Whiteford;
I am one of Daddy's bricks:
Charlie Chaplin isn't in it
When I start to play my tricks.
But my Mammy keeps a record,
And my Daddy keeps a strap:
If it wasna for thae auld folk
I would be an awfu' chap.

Though I don't know where I come frae
I am here and no mistake,
And for fun amang the lasses
I can surely take the cake.
I would like to buy a brother
But I don't know where they're sold,
So until we meet each other
I must just do what I'm told.

Merry Andrew—son of John Whiteford of Winnipeg, Bricklayer.

**THE THAW**

FROM winter's melting drifts the waters are wobbling;
Spring poets in travail are tearing their hair;
The cat has had kittens; the turkeys are gobbling;
For seeding the fallow lies lovingly bare.
All nature, uneasy, is wailingly breezy:
She's working out wonders through noon, night and morn.
We folk in the secret will tell it to please ye:
Spring, Summer, and other things soon will be born.

"THREE YEARS," *K. OF K.

TUNE: "Tullochgorum."

*To be sung "somewhere in France" by
Cpl. Leslie Montgomery.*

OLD K. of K. gave us three year
To clear the Bosches out of here
And by old K. of K. we swear
 We surely mean to do it.
He watches us from place on high,
 K. of Khartoum, K. of Khartoum,
Watching us from place on high
 Knows that we can do it.
He watches us from place on high
To see us make the Germans fly
And see the cursed Kaiser die
 Before third year is through wi't.

Now General Haig will understand
That France and Belgium's holy land
And no infernal German band
 Can be allowed to keep them.
For nigh three years they've had a lease,
 K. of Khartoum's, K. of Khartoum's.
We must try brave K. to please:
 We can always wheep them,—
We've got the guns, we've got the men;
The pigs we must put in their pen
And see they don't come out again,—
 Then out of here let's sweep them.

To trench and dug-out take farewell:
They've been to Fritz the jaws of hell,
But gate of heav'n to ours as well
 There's no denying that, say.
So up and at them any way.
 K. of Khartoum, K. of Khartoum
Knows you'll beat them, come what may:

Please old K. of Khartoum.
 The Germans toasted "To The Day":
 It came, but went the other way.
 On road to Berlin march away:
 Three cheers for K. of Khartoum!
 1917

*K. of K.—Kitchener of Khartoum.

HELLO! OH, HELLO!

Song mailed to Leslie Montgomery in C.E.F. in France.

HELLO! oh, hello!
 You boys from Winnipeg,
 Or up above, or down below
 Beware of bombs I beg.
 We wish you to keep down,—
 Till Fritz of course comes up,
 For girls aroun' this bally town
 Are cursing old von Krupp.

Hello! oh, hello!
 Here's Thingummy come home
 And somewhere in his inside show
 He has some chips of bomb.
 When one meets him on Main,
 You think you hear a bell,
 For all the time there is a chime
 That he's brought home from hell.

Hello! oh hell! oh,
 They say that war is It,
 But still our boys they go
 No matter who get hit,
 Determined that the Hun
 Shall dearly rue "The Day"
 His zeppelins and submarines
 And gas works started play.

1917.

PRAYER FOR THRESHING GANG

God bless the men in each *caboose,
Who a' deserve a better house.
For why? Although they've little sense,
They're helpers in Thy Providence.
As for their sins: they a' confess
To more or less unrighteousness.
Yet Lord gie them a great surprise
And better house in Paradise.

*"Caboose"—Little house on wheels in which the threshermen sleep. In Scottish, house is pronounced hoose, and rhymes with caboose.

FREEMEN ALL

WE'RE freemen all: no Kaiser's thrall
Shall ever bind our souls.
Our lives are ours: no monarch's pow'rs
Shall levy slav'ry's tolls.
We fear no scaith: a freeman's death
Is glory multiplied.
Your plea for fight, your cultured might
Shall always be defied.
Right here and now, we make our vow
Utterly to destroy
The dastard foe, above, below,
Who use tools to annoy.
No Belgian raid to make afraid
Shall he again enjoy:
Cursed be the hound wherever found
Would cultured crime alloy.

AWAY, FAR AWAY

AWAY where peaceful folk did dwell,
 Away, far away,
The Germans turned a heav'n to hell,
 Away, far away.
Resentment roused Canadian boys
Who left their own dear ones and joys
To go defend whom foe annoys,
 Away, far away.

**THE LETTERS**

TUNE: "*Auld Lang Syne*."

I sent a note to my best girl;
I maunna tell her name:
I've got an answer here my lads,—
 They're a' quite weel at hame.

She says she isna frichtit now
 Since we are in the trench,
Glengaries cockit on our brow,
 And sworn to help the French.

She vows she kens how we can fecht
 Wi' Germans in a raw
And closely packed to gie them wecht,—
 She sees the meltin' snaw.

But meltin' snaw ower-rins the banks
 Endang'rin' a' that's near,
And hustlin' Huns in closest ranks
 In a' her dreams appear.

Still, still when chorin' roun' the house
 She croons a wee bit sang,
And prays for time when we'll be crouse
 And things a' richt now wrang:

Then, then hurrah for Winnipeg,
When we've cleared out the Huns!
There, there we'll never need to beg
For hame made bread or buns.

1917.



THE "PLEDGE CARD"

THROUGH all this worldly war and strife
I hate to hear the church's call:
For so it is, upon my life,
I rob Pa Pete to pay Oom Paul.

For years I have not worked for pelf
But just for love, from Fall to Fall,
And see, all 'round folk like myself
Just rob Pa Pete to pay Oom Paul.

Still, war is worse than anything
That I can do at duty's call:
So while our boys are in the ring
I'll rob Pa Pete to pay Oom Paul.

1917.

THE REASON

BECAUSE Billy the Kaiser said "die,"
Some millions of Germans did do it,
And just to raise William so high,—
If there's one other reason construe it.
They have done what they could just to please,
And millions have died for that reason:
The remainder are choosing high trees,
For they mean to raise him for high treason.

1917.

***LANGEMARCK**

OUR first contingent stood the brunt
Of brutal Germans' frightful way;
And woeful was the urgent stunt
Our boys put up around Ypres.
Our brave French Allies had been "gassed"
And agonized were in retreat:
Their gunners furiously rode past
Which looked as tho' they'd met defeat.
Canadians stood their ground, thank God!
And "saved the situation" then,
Though Germans vow it was a fraud
That such was done by too few men.

'Twas April twenty-two and three,
In the first year of the Great War,
While in reserve at poor Ypres
They saw and heard the great uproar.
At dusk the word "fall in" was called
And orders giv'n quietly to march
Towards the place where French were mauled,
And re-take guns from foemen arch.
At midnight they had reached the spot:
At two a.m. stripped for the fray,

They charged—let it not be forgot—
Retook the guns and saved Calais.
At roll-call there were thirty-two!
Think of it men, all we at home,—
A thousand fell for me and you,
Though all of them found not their tomb.
After roll-call, now count the loss:
Captains, all from Winnipeg,
Geddes, Jamieson and Ross,
Braver ne'er wore philibeg;
And ev'ry Province had its loss
In officers and many men.
Proudly we know that each wee cross
Bears evidence to that. Amen.

1917.

*The 10th and 16th Battalions together were in this engagement. The total casualties were more than "a thousand." The number "thirty-two" cannot apply to the survivors; the author originally may have had in mind a company.

GODDESSES OF FATE

We lean upon the Spirit, we
Who love the earth, the sky, the sea,
And all that is therein of life,
Nor seek to soil our souls by strife.
For Love is Spirit, Love is God,
And lives in sea and sky and sod,—
A reproducing element
Creating all with good intent.
Opposed to this the normal state,
A "kultur" hath appeared of late,
Which cultured Germans calleth hate,
And worship as the God of fate,—
Which Goddesses of fate resent
And foil the Huns ere they repent.

1917.

HEIGH-HO!

HEIGH-HO! how I wish he'd come hame!
For kind was the laddie that I winna name,
 He and the like o' him over the sea
 Fighting for freedom for you and for me.
Heigh-ho! how I wish he'd come hame!

Heigh-ho! how I wish he'd come hame!
Though finely I ken that he isna to blame:
 He wadna thole to be shouthered aside
 By Carl or Kaiser in view of his bride.
Heigh-ho! how I wish he'd come hame!

Heigh-ho! how I wish he'd come hame!
For oxen or bronchos are naething to tame,—
 Bosches are things of a lower degree:
 No one can trust them by land or by sea.
Heigh-ho! how I wish he'd come hame!

Heigh-ho! how I wish he'd come hame!
The G***** a' safe in the pens whence they came,
 Till that's accomplished he'll fecht though he die.
 That makes him dearer—I say't wi' a sigh.
Heigh-ho! how I wish he'd come hame!

JOHN HIGHLANDMAN, CANADIAN SCOTTISH

TUNE: "Rantin' Rovin' Robin."

TRUE freedom's born on mountain peaks
Where brave men needna wear the breeks,
Where bagpipes answer eagles' shrieks,
As played by some John Highlandman.

CHORUS:

He is a braw John Highlandman,
He is a brave John Highlandman.
Be sure he'll do whate'er he can
To earn the name John Highlandman.

When freedom was personified,
Then warp and weft for kilts were dyed:
Clan-tartan cloth was wov'n wi' pride
To clothe the braw John Highlandman.

Transplanted in Canadian soil
He stood the heat, the cold, the toil,
But pulled up stakes when Kaiser vile
Broke faith wi' John Bull Highlandman.

The bagpipes skirled in Winnipeg,
True men had donned the fillibeg,
And lasses a' admired the leg
Of war-inspired John Highlandman.

He's ower the sea "somewhere in France";
E'en now has stayed the Hun advance.
Canadian Scottish now enhance
The glory of John Highlandman.

Gin he be fed on Athol brose
And aye hae sneeshin for his nose,
The Kaiser's "Gott" won't save our foes
Frae our Canadian Highlandman.

FAIREST LAND AND BRAVEST MEN

THE fairest land in this fair world
Is blest with bravest men,
And when their freedom was imper'l'd
They mustered there and then.
"Farewell my native land," they cried:
"Farewell dear friends to thee."
Brute strength of Huns is now defied
Despite their mine strewn sea.
Hun frightfulness in Belgium,
Hun frightfulness in France
Shall never daunt the lads who come
To stay their vile advance,
Shall never daunt the lads who come
To stay their vile advance.

The German folk have been betrayed
By Kaiser, church and state:
Of dastard trinity afraid,
Destruction seems their fate.
For while the Hohenzollerns reign
Or Prussians wield the sword
The dove of peace shall fly in vain
From hand of their war lord.
Hun frightfulness in Belgium,
Hun frightfulness in France
Shall never daunt the lads who come
To stay their vile advance,
Shall never daunt the lads who come
To stay their vile advance.

WIN THE WAR

ARGUMENTS but stultify:
"Win the war" should be the cry,—
Men and money, everything,
To the sacred service bring.
Sacrifice!—not wordy noise—
Wins the war for freedom's joys.

1917.



JOHN FROST

JOHN Frost came here short while ago
Bare-faced, not ev'en a coat of snow:
But now he's gone, his work is seen
On things few days ago were green.

The "murphy" mourns its blackened sail
But waits our "tattie-howkin'" pail:
The pumpkin, bean, and tomato
No more respond to rake and hoe.

Yet compensation's to be had
Ev'n in this plight that seems "too bad":
For we've only to raise our eyes
Towards the everlasting skies,—

And there, between the earth and heav'n,
A feast for sair een's surely giv'n:
The glorious colouring of tree-leaves
Our faith in John Frost's art retrieves.

Ev'n so it is when war we wage
A stricken field's an awful page:
But look aboon and see the stars,
God's eyes approving freedom's wars.

16th September, 1917.

A SACRIFICE

*Lines on the death of Lieut. A. F. Christie, son of the
Minister of Westminster Church.*

YOUR blood lies on the battle-field:
Your hearts wi' him who laid it there.
Your son went forth our lives to shield,—
Your glory in good works to share.

He fell defending you and me;
He fell defending right from wrong;
He fell,—but may he live to see
And hear us sing the victors' song.

Five wounds he bore, like Him who died,
Like Him, to set a bound world free:
Pain, fear and pride—but satisfied—
Are in thy breasts,—and ours with thee.

'Tis love inspires "our splendid men":
'Tis hate that bids the foe advance,—
But Love shall win! What then? What then?
Praise Love! Give hate no other chance!

September 1917.

TWIN PROCLAMATIONS

*Military Service Act, and Union Government: fragment of
a letter to Leslie Montgomery, one of the Camerons
with the C.E.F., in France.*

'Tis five a.m. and here I am
With nought to break the peaceful calm
Unless it be a faintish snore
Escaping from a bed-room door:
Or can it be a distant sound
Comes echoing from the battle ground
In company with that same sun
That starts you on your daily run?

This is indeed the day of days
That Canada has earned some praise:
For she has wakened fresh and clean;—
To sound the reveille I mean,
To rouse a hundred thousand men
To wield the sword instead of pen
And back our brave ones in the field,
Like Camerons who never yield.

Indeed this very day begins
By proclamations (very twins):
The call to arms of ev'ry man
And government non-partisan.
While soon, the day's not very far,
M.P.s will pledge to "win the war"
And if these fail by pledge to bide
To such M.P.s woe, woe betide!

Well here's good luck and glory be
To you good boys beyond the sea!

1917.



THREE YEARS OF WAR

THREE years have flown since Kaiser Bill
Invaded Belgium and France;
Three years have gone since allied skill
Had stayed the brutal Hun advance:
But still brute strength maintains his place
Where he had never right to be;
Repeats disgrace upon disgrace
From heights in air and depths of sea.

Now Haig and Hindenburg at grips,
The Scotsman has the upper hand,
And smites the Hun on thighs and hips
Till he can neither sit nor stand
But falling back again repeats:
"A vict'ry for the Fatherland,

Our strategy lies in retreats
To scientific huts—of sand."

Meantime our Uncle Samuel
Has sent our cousins to the front,
And they're the lads to give Huns hell
In any kind of wrestling stunt,
Tenacious as the English bull,
Lithe as the greyhound of the Scot:
The German dachshund was a fool
The downing of such dogs to plot.

How long the Germans took to train
We do not know and cannot say,
But this I know and will maintain
They took a year for Samuel's day,—
By which I mean: comparison
Though sometimes odious and wrong
Will shew when all is said and done
Those in the right may yet be strong.

So thus the Germans will be fooled
By those they meant to overwhelm:
The seas by British shall be ruled
In favour of each free-born realm.
To Kaiserdom they'll ne'er be slaves,
Nor e'er succumb to Prussian brutes.
To freemen still our banner waves:
Come on! Tear wrong up by the roots.

1917.



MY BONNIE DEARIE

"Ca' the yowes to the knowes,
Ca' them where the heather grows,
Ca' them where the burnie rows,
My bonnie dearie.
Hark! the mavis' evening sang
Sounding Clouden's woods amang

Then a-faulding let us gang
My bonnie dearie." (Burns)

So my lover sang to me
Nigh yon Scottish hill so hie:
Back again now he maun flee,
My bonnie dearie.
German wolves in Belgium fauld
Ravished yowes baith young and auld:
Wha wi' rage grew het and cauld?
My bonnie dearie.

German hate had been concealed;
Suddenly it was revealed:
Belgian wounds can ne'er be healed,
My bonnie dearie.
Kahki-clad he faulded me,
Pressed me sair my mou' to pree:
Now he's fechtin ower the sea,
My bonnie dearie.

1917.



THE HUN

Look at the Hun, beyond Verdun,
Right in his neighbour's yard,
A princeling he from Germanie
And held in high regard.
The bloated ass he spews his gas
On men of better breed,
And now and then progs on his men
On pastures new to feed.

His "kultur" great, of church and state,
He teaches as he goes,
And says he knows that of his foes
None can withstand his blows.
That being so 'tis right, you know,
To murder, cheat and rob:

Commit the crimes of ancient times
When Satan bossed the job.

Now don't forget to spread your net
To catch a fat galoot!
For that you know is all the go
And man is just a brute.
So take your gun and have some fun
By killing any thing:
Blood thirstiness is nothing less
Than princely frolicking.

1917.



A CHRISTMAS CARD

To friends in France with the C.E.F.

DEAR boys, your work so hazardous
Is much appreciated:
Each time you ply your blunderbuss
Your home-folk feel elated.

Haig must have been on haggis fed
So stubborn his offensive:
Hun Hindenburg so often bled
Must now be peevey pensive.

A word from Haig, you're ower the top
Impetuous as the blizzard:
Out yonder just as hard to stop
As that Canadian wizard.

Then with your day's objective won
You feel the fame and glory,
And hear your officers' "well done:
This day is born a story."

And so the stories you pile up
Of this and that place taken:
Each one just takes the cake and cup
As t' other is forsaken.

Your visions now near Christmas time
Too sacred are, Dear Brothers,
For such as I to touch in rhyme
So I'll leave that to others:

But all the same my heart's wi' you,
Or frolicking or fighting.
By Christmas may the war be through,
All Christendom delighting.

1917.



LETTER, CHRISTMAS 1917,

*To Mr. and Mrs. James Hunter, Saskatoon,
Saskatchewan.*

OF Hunter I am not afraid
In sending kiss to his dear maid.

But should he howl "unorthodoxy!"
Well I can have it done by proxy.

So there you are, go to it Jim,—
One loving kiss to pleasure him.

Then to your Christmas festival
With loving wife and loving pal.

Syne ponder on an auld frien's wishes
While you, like him, go wash the dishes:

I wish ye health and happiness,
What ye deserve and nothing less.

I wish that you were here wi' me
To curse the Kaiser while we're free.

I wish that dear old Uncle Sam
May be in time Hun flood to dam.

I wish the Russians would unite,
One foe, and that the Hun, to fight.

I wish and pray—but what's the use?
My wishes a' wad fill a house.

But ae wish mair before we part:
I wish ye weel wi' a' my heart.

And, child-like, let us cry, hooray!
For Christmas and for New Year's Day.

Kindest regards from me and mine
To thee and thine.

Your auld frien',
R. B. THOMSON.



LETTER, CHRISTMAS 1917,

*To Mr. and Mrs. George Fisher, acknowledging
receipt of flowers.*

THE pow'rs on high as earth rolls by
See everything that passes,—
Destructive Hun and what he's done
To peaceful lads and lasses.

True chivalry, in rivalry,
Heroically rallies,
To cross the seas to stand at ease
Or brave the Bosches' sallies.

We here, meanwhile, the hours beguile;
Peace and goodwill surround us:
And pow'rs on high, as earth rolls by,
In fellowship have found us.

Dear Santa Claus has our applause
For flow'rs and things he brought us:
With gifts like these on Christmas trees
The Christ-like one has sought us.

Yon primula from you to Ma,
So sweet to eyes and noses,
Were truly bold to stand the cold,—
Premiers of the primroses.

But how they prove the pow'r of love,
Peace, and goodwill and kindness,
Is seen by these—old R.B.T.'s:
Look on all faults wi' blindness.



TO MISS DOROTHY BROWN

On the eve of her marriage to Major Donald Williamson.

D DEAR Dorothy, to thee Godspeed!
O On pastures new you go to feed.
R Responsible to Him above
O Oh satisfy thy soul with Love,
T That so, in the Good Shepherd's time,
H He'll find His yowes and lambs sublime.
Y Your mate stay rav'nous wolves,—no crime.

1917.

LETTER TO MR. GEORGE FISHER*St. Andrew's Day, 1917.*

HOORAY! and yet again hooray!
What happened you Saint Andrew's Day?
Wise folk—some fourteen hundred, mair—
Placed you in aldermanic chair.
Coöperation now may spread
As quickly as the P.T. Bed,—
That much despised but fav'rite flow'r
That children played wi' by the hour
And valued in so many ways.
I'm not ashamed to sing its praise:
Its luscious greens their rabbits fed;
They squeezed its stems, saw how it bled;
Then joined them till a necklace grew,
While fluffy, white-pow'd anes they blew.
Syne startled at what there they read
They babbed the yellow anes and fled
Fast down the brae and ower the burn
And drapping flowers at ev'ry turn,
Arriving hame,—in dirty paws
Some bonnie flowers for their Ma-maws.
Coöperation now may spread
As quickly as the P.T. Bed,
For though some look at it askance
They cannot stay its proud advance,
And union in a righteous cause,
Should earn each righteous man's applause.

Congratulations! Due to you
And due to those who saw you through.

Your auld frien,
Kindest regards to all.

R. B. THOMSON.

REPLY TO WESTMINSTER CHURCH CIRCULAR

Re: "400 Club."

To contribute beyond one's means
Just leaves a donkey short of beans.
To bleed your simple people white
Has earned opprobrious name—"exploit":
For why? you do't in name of those
Who stem just such exploiters' blows.

1917.



LINES

On the birth of Peter Rowland Campbell-Jarratt.

MORE cozy and costly than gold in a garret
There lay for a while the wee mite Campbell-Jarratt,
And the Lady Moon passing watched patiently for it,
And the stork looked to her for some warning.

All, all unaware of life's turmoil and terrors
The innocent enters a world full of errors:
The Lady Moon using clear ice as her mirrors
Signalled stork-word benignly one morning.

And the stork did some wonderful work on that day,
That delighted the hearts of both Rowland and May,
And the Lady Moon saw the sweet babe as it lay,
The brave breast of its Mother adorning.

How they knew, what they saw, that the babe was a boy!
That shall never be known? but enhanced was their joy,
And the Lady Moon smiled for she knew war's alloy
Could not hurt babe Canadian that morning.

Then the news was flashed over the sea to Grand Dad
That his grandchild was like what he was when a lad,
And the Lady Moon saw the old people were glad
As she passed Ripley, Surrey, returning.

Though parents are glad that they've gotten wee Peter
Some friends still insist that a girl would be sweeter:
The Lady Moon rising just looks at her metre
And says: "One at a time: we're adjourning."

1917.

**AULD DAVID DUNCAN**

(SONG)

WE'RE over the three score and ten, Sir,
But we are na broodin' owre that:
There's mony a couple we ken, Sir,
Much aulder, yet laugh and grow fat.
There's auld Davie Duncan the Fiddler;
At reels and strathspeys he's the king:
Pagannini, compared, was a twiddler,—
I ne'er danced to his Hielan fling.

Ho! ho! and ha, ha! laughs auld Davie:
"The floor, an' I'll play ye a spring";
And I, like a sly Scottish knavie,
Led aff wi' his wife roun' the ring.
Sciatica waur than the toothache
And troubles enough has he seen,
But his principal cure is Scotch music,
And I'm glad that auld Davie's my frien'.

1918.

DELIVING

IN the garden of my soul
I've been delving now and then
Flow'rs of spirit to enroll
On behalf of fellow men.

**AN EASTER EGG**

*Lines mailed to Roland St. Clair, New York City, and
Hugh Kennedy, Minnedosa, both recently of Winnipeg.*

HEREIN, I beg, find Easter Egg,
Not of the kind "cold storage,"
But fresh as paint, without a taint
Of last year's barn-yard forage.
Forbye, 'tis Lent and not been sent
To fortify the body;
And soul and mind may aiblins find
'Tis Spirit,—no, not toddy.
As spirits rise at each surprise
We have from auld acquaintance,
May this, by you, in pastures new
Be sipped without repentance,
And possibly this Festival
Will satisfy and not appal.

1918.

GUN-SERMONS

WHEN your guns speak to the Germans
And the Germans make reply,
Make your aim like all good sermons
Strike the heart, and hate defy.
Love of justice, truth and freedom
For all folk in this old world,
Takes the place of former creed-dom
While our liberty's imper'l'd.

1918.

**THE FROZEN PEN***To Boys "at the front."*

JOHN Frost for northern climes en route
Poetic springs are thawing out
And make me give you boys a shout:
Hello boys, hello!
Arise and answer wi' three cheers,
You who have lived intensive years.
That's right, you banish all my fears
Of foe, boys, of foe.

Selah.

This year, dear boys, may end your fight
For love, for freedom and for right,
And haply seal the German fate,
Who fight for slavery and hate.

No fault of yours that Russian Bear
Has slunk ignobly to its lair
And left a hole in old corral
Through which the Bosches' dachshunds crawl.

Depend upon't the Japanese
Do not intend to stand at ease

But, landing at Vladivostock
Will try the Huns' approach to block.

While in the Saloniki sphere
The Huns in hordes may now appear
For fine they ken they won't get through
The Western front long held by you.

But here's John Frost has froze my pen,
For which you say: "Thank God, Amen!"
You rascals, after such a screed
You have a cheek, oh aye, indeed.

1918.



FLOWERS OF THE MIND

(SONG)

WONDERFUL as flow'rs of prairie,
Flow'rs of the mind:
Music, poetry, tale of fairy
Ever so kind.

Poetry launched on music's waving,
Wedded the arts:
Surging, swelling, yea soul-saving,
Soothing to hearts;

Organ tones or trumpets thrilling,
Drums on the roll;
Piccolo and violin trilling,
Moving the soul.

Saul-like saved from gloom or madness,
Once and again:
Hail to music, song and gladness!
Amen, Amen.

A FIELD FOR MISSIONS*Dedicated to Billy Sunday.*

WHEN the war is over and the K***** gone to hell,
 When the war is over and the K***** gone to hell,
 When the war is over we may live again in clover,
 And a remedy discover that may sound Hun-kultur's knell.

There's a field for missions in the G***** Fatherland,
 There's a field for missions in the G***** Fatherland,
 There's a field for missions: to destroy the Hun ambitions
 And to introduce conditions that a Hun can understand.

To convert the Bosches is no simple, little task,
 To convert the Bosches is no simple, little task,
 To convert the Bosches we must go in red cross coaches
 And look out for Hun approaches with our noses in gas mask.

1918.

**DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS**

EACH nation in our Empire broad
 Repudiates with scorn
 That kings or kaisers come from God
 To rule all humbler born.
 The people rule, of good they're full
 And by all good they measure:
 Or king or cobbler if he's good
 He is indeed a treasure.

Selah.

What about our King?
 The King's all right.
 What about our Flag?
 The Flag's all right.
 The people they are free
 And nobly fight

For God and right
To save their liberty.

Selah.

No mailed fist would dare persist
With threat'ning poise to scare us:
If so they'd try, to them good-bye;
If they won't love, they'll fear us.

1918.

SPATTS

To W.J.H.—*"Heliograms," Free Press Office.*

I hae followed your havers anent wearin' "Spatts"
An' between you an' me and the curb of the pave
We wad drink to the wearers tho't were but wi' "swats,"
Wi' our thoughts on the lasses an' eke on the brave.

Spatts are cleanly contraptions invented lang syne
Just to keep the feet clean through war's wearisome roads
As at present, where kilties are killing Hun swine
And whiles up to the ankles when bayonet prods,

So why, Sir, and wherefore should they be misca'd?
Or why, Sir, or wherefore should I be called fop?
For the lasses wear spatts as do each kiltie lad,
While I wear a pair that went "over the top."

1918.

MOTHER AND WIFE

In the battle of life
The sweet mother and wife
Have aye borne most bravely disaster,
All for those that they love
Whether here or above
And earned the "well done" of the Master.

GERMANY HELD AT BAY

If to be right is half the fight
Then woe to Germany
Whose brutal strength is matched at length
And firmly held at bay.
They have broken ev'ry law
And forfeited ev'ry right:
They have lost the very sympathy
We give men in a plight.
By premeditated murder
And ev'ry other crime
Deliberately planned and named
As god-like and sublime
By men who claim that culture
Means exterminating good,
They will emulate the vulture
Till they're forced to change their mood.

1918.

**FOOD CONTROL**

IN these utilitarian times
Folk can't be fashed wi' songs and rhymes,
But now ta'en up wi' German crimes
They try to save the dollar.
They're thrifty now as ne'er before,
Ne'er sae thrifty, ne'er sae thrifty,
Thrifty now as ne'er before
To please the food controller
Who sees the wolf approach the door,—
The poverty we a' abhor,—
Sae I maun sing to cheer the poor
Till they've mair work for molar.

Our soldiers they maun hae their grub
In spite of aeroplane or sub.
And so you see right here's the rub,—
 We'll try to be omniscient,—
And we hae gotten grub enough,
Fish and tautties, fish and tautties,
We hae gotten grub enough
 Wi' calories sufficient;
Yes we hae gotten grub enough
To gie the wolf an awfu' bluff,
For calorie you know's the stuff
 To make a man efficient.

Wi' tautties,—wha wad say them nay?
And oatmeal twa—three times a day,
A diet Scots and Irish say
 Raised best o' men and horses:
For breakfast,—parritch, toast and cheese;
For dinner,—tautties fried in grease;
For supper,—anything ye please,
 As suits each other's purses.
At ony rate let's save the wheat
That goes to bring the Hun defeat,
And as for bacon and flesh meat
 Eat less: good sense endorses.

1918.

MY ROUTINE WORK

I rise at five and slip down stairs
To tend the furnace till it flares;
Then up and make a pot of tea
And snack for Lily, Ma and me.
This peaceful half hour with the wife
I wadna miss to save my life.
Then down to make a spread for four:
Take shaving water to their door;

Down, down again to brush their shoes;
Then out for paper with the news;
Serve out the porridge, toast and tea,—
Then bid adieu to lawyers three.
Syne mix and knead the fam'ly bread,
Clean breakfast dishes and re-spread
To have a lunch in simplest style.
Thence to the basement for a while
To clean the furnace, sift the ash.
Then for the bathroom make a dash.
When tidied up 'tis dinner time
And after that I write some rhyme
That I've had running in my head
Since five o'clock I jumped from bed.

Imagine other things I do:
Imagination's good for you.

I LOVE A LASS

TUNE: "*Monymusk*."

I love a lass like onything.
I wish she'd let me buy the ring:
How I wad dance the Hielan fling
And snap my thumb at batching it.

O she is guid and clean and strong:
There's no a lad daur dae her wrong.
A bonnie flow'r 'mang ony throng,
I fell in love aye watching it.

The ring's the jewel I admire:
To think o't sets my soul on fire.
The bonnie lass o' my desire
Has got the han' to han'som' it.

Of her sweet smiles I get my share
And dinna think I need despair.
My love I think I maun declare:
O that her love wad ransom it!

TRY AGAIN

THE world is rolling up the years
And record of their smiles and tears,
Their righteousness, their wrongs, their fears,
 All hid away
Until the Son of Man appears
 On the last day.

What awful things will then unroll
To humble ev'ry human soul
As 'gainst the heav'ns the earth's dread scroll
 Shall then appear,
The sight of which we'll hardly thole
 For very fear.

Cause and effect may all be shewn:
Each evil deed may then be known,
And how, oh how can men atone
 When over there?
Their vantage ground—on earth—all gone,
 How shall men fare?

That, sure, would be a picture show
To cause "the gods" to weaken so
They'd tumble o'er to,—down below,
 The place known well.
Could th' others tumble up? Oh no:
 They'd go to hell.

Thus ev'ry soul falls self condemned:
But suddenly their fall is stemmed,
And each is caught by cloth well hemmed
 To stand the strain,
And loving voice says "not condemned
 But try again."

**ANSWER TO INTIMATION
OF WEDDING**

DEAR Margaret, you're married
I see from other side.
I wish it had miscarried
And you'd been ——'s bride.

Wee cupid has been elfish
My wishes to deride:
Though altogether selfish,—
Grandchildren are my pride.

It's cupid I am blaming
In counting this my loss:
And not your Tom defaming,—
He's worth Victoria's cross.

Nay, more than that, I'll perish
If I don't think him good:
And you he'll fondly cherish,
Make happy—as he should.

**SONG OF GRATITUDE**

To noble men and women
Who God-like gave their sons
To stay yon wave inhuman,
Of brutal modern Huns,
Our song of gratitude
Is raised in thankfulness,
And they and theirs, so good,
The world will surely bless.

Those sons who were most daring,
At danger only laughed
While on some mission faring,—
The heroes' glory quaffed
As nobly led or leading
They rushed upon the foe,
For right and freedom bleeding,
The first to glory go.

1918.



WIN-THE-WAR DOINGS

With a win-the-war smile on my face
And a win-the-war song for my friends,
I can go at a win-the-war pace,
And for old age perhaps make amends.

With a win-the-war patch on my pants,
And a win-the-war hat on my head;
With a win-the-war tax on my wants,
And with corn, rye and bran in my bread;

With a win-the-war hate for what's wrong;
With a win-the-war love for what's right,—
Let us sing a wee win-the-war song,
And thus help in our win-the-war fight;

Send some win-the-war notes to the boys;
To our win-the-war wounded good cheer:
Let us husband our win-the-war joys,
For the war will be won,—never fear.

1918.

DEAR MADGE

*Prelude to letter sent to daughter residing in London,
England, 3rd June, 1918, whose husband at the
time was employed in the War Office.*

AGAIN Ma taks me by the lug
And leads me to my writing desk.
Resisting I'm,—“an auld humbug
And winna dae a think I ask.
Ye write your poetry by the yard
And send it to the firing line
Where boys stand high in your regard
Because they stay Hun lord divine.
Sit down and write to our wee lass:
She also is in jeopardy
And maybe thinks that you're an ass.”
Dear Madge, I shouldna tell a lie:
Your Mother dear said nae sic thing.
I'm only bletherin' to you
And just gaun roun' about the ring
To see if I can wauchle through:
For there's nae doubt I've been remiss
In many ways, for many years;
But when we meet we'll hae a kiss
And banish a' our many fears.

LINES

*Written in response to a request received 8th July, 1918, for
"a screed" to be read to a Burns Club in New Zealand,
by Mr. John Brackenridge, Hillmorton, Ch. Ch.,
New Zealand.*

YOUR note to haun—it had nae date
Nor could I read that on the stamp:
It micht hae met a wat'ry fate
But it was neither dry nor damp.

John Lambie's death was quite a shock
For he had made a pact wi' me—
Maybe he meant it for a joke,—
He had to know when I would die.

Your ae request I maun fulfil:
You say you want "a screed to spout";
Well this maun dae though it should kill
Auld Pegasus when I shall mount.

Selah.

SING:

SAINT ANDREW'S DAY
, (Page 80)

READ:

TOAST
(Page 81)

SING:

Selection from
OPERATIC, ORATORICAL, ORATORIOICAL, CANTATA
(Page 72)

READ:

WE glory in our Scottish blood;
We glory in our brawn and brains;
We glory that we crossed the flood;
We glory in our wives and weans.

A few years in a parish school;
A few years maybe at a trade;
A knowledge of the golden rule,
Then learn of nations to be made:

We're there betimes and thus equipped
We tackle nature in the rough,
And sod and saw logs soon are ripped
And new home nestled in a bluff.

New Zealand! Canada! Scotch wit
To spread and civilize the world:
Or here or there we firmly sit
Where'er the Union Jack's unfurled.

The nations of our Empire built
And laws and constitutions filed,
We'd hate to have our blue blood spilt
Or be of our good works despoiled.

Now as we've reached a highish plane
As Christians, civilized, at rest,
Our neighbours seldom call in vain
For help when they are sore opprest.

And so it was when brutal Hun
Had raided Belgium's peaceful farms
Our young men grabbed their favourite gun
And answered to her loud alarms;

Yet though it take a hundred years
They'll kill or cure the frightful beasts,
That folk may live without such fears
As now prevail at our love feasts.

That godless, heartless, P***** brutes
Should desecrate creation so
Shall justify that by the roots
We tear them up for—down below.

Selah.

My wife says I'm a vain auld man,
And surely it is true;
For gin you're made on Scottish plan,
Maist likely sae are you.

But 'tis a privilege indeed—
War service ye'll agree—
To write a sang or wee bit screed
To kin across the sea:

Especially at this very turn
When freedom is at stake
Should we remember Bannockburn
Where freemen won the cake.

And as for "kultur"! heav'ns above!
Hun "kultur" led to hate:
John Knox's culture led to love
And love will fix Huns' fate.

Vain glorious! lang be it sae,
Auld Scotland's stand to praise
Syne always foremost in the fray
In these and former days.

But goodbye dear John Brackenridge:
You're welcome to this screed;
I thank ye for the privilege
Of bidding Scots godspeed.

With kindest regards,
R. B. THOMSON.

13th July, 1918



TO REV. J. L. GORDON,

In asking for letter on leaving his Church.

So long as life and wits remain
To all and sundry I'll maintain
Your sermons exercised my brain
And roused my soul:
Now I must sleep in slower train
And homeward roll.

To build them on historic themes
Then launch in living language streams
Till o'er the congregation gleams
Pearls highly priced,—
The aim of all great preachers' dreams,
Character, Christ!

To thoughts of God you aye replied
That Christ was Love personified
And therefore God, who aye defied
The pow'rs of hell:
But, lastly, on the cross He died
His love to tell.

1918.

A POSTSCRIPT

Sometimes added when sending a song to a friend.

A song is better than any letter
That I can write to you.
So here's good luck, where'er you're stuck:
I trust that you'll win through.



OUR LITTLE BLACK DEVILS AND CAMERON MEN

(SONG)

OUR Little Black Devils and Cameron men
Have beaten the Bosches again and again,
And proudly they're known by the French as Foch pets,
A glory well earned, no Canadian regrets.
The kindred of Luther gone from the straight path
Have brought on the Germans all righteous men's wrath:
To worship a kaiser, bow down to his state,
Shall bring to such people a well deserved fate.

When blood-thirsty Prussians with hate as their "Gott"
Grabbed peace-loving Belgians and French by the throat
They reckoned that hell in each horrible phase
Would place the whole world at their feet in few days:
But Britain awoke at the sound of the fray,
Remembered the threat in Hun toast—"to the Day";
And fearless as ever at foemen's brute strength
Unleashed her bull dog at the dachshund's long length.

The Kaiser in fury yelled out for the Turk
To start a side show in the same bloody work:
Armenians were slaughtered, their women fared worse,
Such work to be paid from indemnity's purse.
Great Britain's Dominions sprang prompt to the sword:
Their fearless young fellows called out "All aboard!"
Braved storms, and great dangers quite new to the sea,
Determined that they and the sea should be free.

OH BOYS, WE'RE GLAD TO SEE YOU HOME

(SONG)

OH Boys, we're glad to see you home
 From England, France and Flanders:
 We blow the trumpet, beat the drum,
 Because you've done such wonders.
 'Twas wonderful to see you go,
 Impelled by righteous fury:
 'Twas glorious to beat the foe
 And bring Canadians glory.

Had Prussian pride and might prevailed
 Who now would be down-hearted?
 But thanks to you such things have failed,
 And peace on earth has started.
 Content to thrust them to the Rhine
 You spared Hun habitations:
 For why? They had begun to whine
 For peace and human rations.

1918.

LINES

*To Mr. and Mrs. George Fisher, acknowledging receipt
 from them of a picture, and a fern in a pot,
 for Mrs. Thomson, Christmas, 1918.*

YON lovely scene to Scottish een
 Is grateful and refreshing:
 Between twa hills the glimm'ring rills
 Toward a lake are rushing;
 The ae back-ground a mighty mound
 Whose snow-capped face is blushing
 As if ashamed and being blamed
 For lakelet's kindly washing;
 While through the trees, pine-scented breeze
 The mountain's brow caresses,

And lovingly, approvingly
Dissolves the snow-white tresses.
And thus complete the waters meet,
The rising and the falling,
And all between makes fresh and green
For praise of nature calling.

The lovely ferns like foster bairns
And humble plants are nourished,
And prove to man that nature's plan
Shows good things should be cherished.

How kindly art does touch the heart,
By this wee picture proven,
Is shewn again as fountain pen
The season's wish has woven.
And it is this: that lasting bliss
Through all the years attend ye:
That George and John may carry on
And frae a' ills defend ye.



LINES

*To Mr. and Mrs. James Hunter, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan,
Christmas, 1918.*

DEAR Friends, now may you merry be
This Christmas and New Year,
For peace again you've lived to see
Instead of war to fear.
As you've been merry in the past
When Christmas time came 'round
Hold cheerfulness more hard and fast:
Hun hatefulness is bound.

How much we've to be thankful for
We really do not know:
For dear ones coming from the war,
For friends who need not go;

Foes brought to book for breaking laws,
Their hellish works suppressed,—
For vict'ry won in freedom's cause
By heroes now at rest.

Signed peace will follow armistice
We may believe in that;
So just enjoy the Christmas bliss,
The turkey being fat;
And when you pu' the wishing bone,
On this I maun insist,
Old Santa Claus you'll think upon
For see—you were na missed.



PRAYER

*Commemorating the one-minute silence in business, for
prayer asked by Lt.-Governor Aikins
prior to the Armistice.*

OH God bide a minute to hear what we say.
We claim Thy protection and friendship each day.
Be Thou with Thy soldiers and sailors who fight
That Thy cause be maintained for what's good and what's
right.

Hold Thy works of creation in palm of Thy hand
And look at Thine armies on sea and on land
And behold how Thy Spirit upholdeth Thine own
'Gainst the pow'rs of perdition till they're overthrown.
Breathe on Thy defenders and strengthen their will
To finish for ever the pow'rs of all ill,
So that peoples for whom Thou hast directed work
May not be molested by Hun or by Turk
Whose ambition has been to possess all this world
And to do all things wrong though their souls be imper'l'd.

"KILLED IN ACTION"!

"KILLED in action"!
Glorious death!
Men's attraction,
Who have faith:

Faith in righteous cause and holy,—
To defend the weak and lowly,
To defend the homes and country
From the lowest kind of gentry,
Gentry who have lost all trace
Of true and gentlemanly grace,
And imbued with vile ambition
To uphold more vile tradition
That brute strength, or "kultur," brings
Right to uproot sacred things.

"Killed in action"!
Not their loss:
Glorious paction
Of the Cross!

Having fought, there's no more fighting,
In their well won rest delighting;
Having fought and died for others
They are now the Master's brothers:
Killed for Christianity,
Defying inhumanity,
Defying all the pow'rs of hell
Kultured enemy wields so well,—
Called to duty 'gainst the Hun,
"Killed in action," duty done.

LINES

To James Duncan on his wedding day, 25th January, 1919.

FOR auld lang syne I drop a line
To wish success to thee and thine.

Auspiciously you choose the day
When Scottish folk are proud and gay.

A circling world is onward whirled
Around the sun, yet not imper'l'd;

So may thy life with thy dear wife
Go safely through its toil and strife;

And annually, without dismay,
"Replenish" in the olden way.

**THE KIDDIES WHO LIVED LONG AGO**

TUNE: "*Our Little Black Devils and Cameron Men.*" (R.B.T.'s)

I sing of some kiddies who lived long ago
And liked, as you kiddies, to play in the snow:
Toboggans and snowshoes and sleighs were their pride
As swiftly from top of some hill they would slide.
Each game in its season was hailed with delight,
Lacrosse and football were just like a real fight,
And hockey and baseball and tennis the same:
Yet fair-play the jewel that lit up each game.

CHORUS:

Hurrah for the kiddies who lived long ago,
And learned in their games to be fair, tho' not slow,
While later in life as good women and men
They proved themselves heroes again and again.

Those game little kiddies who lived long ago
Grew up and saved us from a terrible foe:
A kaiser who threatened to use frightfulness
And used it till stopped by those kiddies no less.
The sea had its terrors, and war took its toll,
And dread is the story that time shall unroll,
But ever, forever those kids will be known
As kids who grew up to have kaisers o'erthrown.

1919.

+

REPLY

*To rhyming request of ladies of Westminster Church for one
cent per year of ages of mother and daughter,
St. Valentine's Day, 14th February, 1919.*

My wife is only seventy-five:
Your doubts will only grieve me.
Our daughter has been all alive
For thirty-two, believe me.
Accordingly, at the request
Of good Westminster ladies
I'll one-o-seven cents invest
To help save Hun from hades.
Whoever finds this fun o' mine
May have me as her Valentine.

+

LINES

*To Mr. Elias Jones of Rookhurst, Minnedosa, Easter, 1919,
acknowledging receipt of crate of Easter eggs.*

At Christmas time in ev'ry clime
The Christian, he rejoices.
Of heav'nly choir he may aspire
To emulate the voices,

And hymn of praise again may raise
For birth of Him our Saviour
Who lived to preach and people teach
True character—behaviour.

But Easter time is more sublime,
And Easter Eggs remind us
Of Him who died, stone shells defied
And 'rose again to bind us
In the belief that brings relief,—
That "over there" He'll find us.

Be this your stay on Easter day
Is what the writer wishes.
Old R.B.T. mails this to thee
Then falls to washing dishes!



MY PROGENITORS

To nose out my progenitors is quite a task for me,
But help from scientists has come with Darwin theory:
Moreover there's the story true a good way down the line
How Tamar trapped old Judah and became forebear of mine.

I'm satisfied, quite satisfied, I know who was my Dad,
I know who was my Grandmother, and she was good, not
bad;

I know who was her Father, his name was Robert Burns,
And her Mother was like Tamar, not good and bad by turns,

But determined on good progeny and progeny she had
To make this old world better by many a lass and lad
Who in this war for freedom, free from a Kaiser's rule,
Fight on, work on, some dying, but defying German fool.

THE SEMI-OLD TIMER

THE song of a semi-old timer
Who came in the year eighty-four,
Who flourished as farmer and rhymer
On behalf of old timers of yore;
Who aye was a cheery old Christian,
Old sport, and sometimes an old bore,
And the horse that he loved—as equestrian—
Was old Pegasus—then he would soar.

Seven kids and dear wife he was taking
Right back to the plow and the spade.
Eighty-four saw the *Peg in the making:
Nineteen-nineteen now sees it well made.
Eighty-four and Peg streets were a caution!
The †Free Press seldom mentions that year
For the reason, I think I've a notion,
It was sick like my bairnies I fear.

Our reception out here was a corker!
At the station we heard this remark:
(By a gent who seemed no common worker
And who did not speak thus for a lark)
"Each child is worth two thousand dollars
To our government!" What did he mean?
I should like to ask that of our scholars,
And I think I see them scratch their bean.

Sawing wood for John Marshall Scotch Baker;
Printer's devil to dear Jimmie Steen;—
Helped to pay off the Peg's undertaker
And to keep the saut tear frae our een.
Eighty-five, and now six bairns all better,
Then hurrah! for a homestead at last
And old timer's experience—each letter—
But all's well that ends well of the past.

1919.

*"Peg"—Winnipeg.

†"Free Press"—a Winnipeg newspaper.

LULLABY

Written for Mrs. Thomas Newton, formerly Margaret Spaulding, on learning of the birth of her daughter.

DOROTHY

DOROTHY my Dorothy,
Love hath led thy soul to me,
In my likeness to be clothed,
By my lullaby be soothed,
While thou'rt introduced so free
Into life's tempestuous sea.

Dorothy my Dorothy,
Of the hearts surrounding thee,
Grannie's thrills again with pride
As when mother's face she spied
Lying on her heart and arm
Shielding her from mortal harm.

Dorothy my Dorothy,
Daddy bled for you and me:
Loving cup fill to the brim
While through life we're helping him,—
Thus a happy home we'll have
In this world and that above.

1919.

**LETTER**

*To Mr. W. F. Sirrett, Neepawa, Manitoba,
19th August, 1919.*

READ this, but do not answer pray.
For you and yours, believe I'm wae
And sadly feel you've met your day
Of sorest trial.

For comfort we've been taught to go
To Him above—not men we know:
Your *"Eb" up there would have it so.
Take no denial.

And yet 'twas written: "Comfort ye,"
Therefore this note from R.B.T.:
His hand in thine just haud a wee
As 'twere a brother's.

With faith in immortality
And faith in the immortal Three
And faith in Him we hope to see
In love, like Mother's.

My Dear Mr. Sirrett,
Yours faithfully,
R. B. THOMSON.

*"Eb."—Ebenezer Tom Sirrett, son of the addressee. "Eb" was a most likeable young man, and was a friend of Mr. Thomson's sons. His early life was on a farm southwest of Neepawa. From the University of Manitoba he received his B.A. in 1908, and L.L.B. in 1911. After obtaining his certificates as Barrister and Attorney from the Law Society of Manitoba, he went Overseas with the University Battalion and was in active service to the end of the Great War. On his return to Manitoba he was appointed Registrar of the Land Titles Office at Neepawa. Shortly after that he was drowned while on a holiday at Clear Lake.

LINES

*To Mr. David Duncan, in General Hospital, Winnipeg,
mailed 19th August, 1919.*

HERE come I, auld R.B.T.
Unable to work and unwilling to die:
I'm blest if I dinna think mair o' this world
Than when I was fechtin' wi't, colours unfurled.

For now I'm assured that there's kindness yet in't,
And lavish at that, exercised without stint.
And though, as I hear, it is drawin' your leg
Ye shouldna been dancin' wi' young Winnipeg!

Be that as it may, we are where we can see
The kindness o' folk bred by you and by me.
So we baith must admit that our music had charms
As well as the lasses we took in our arms:

And wi' your wife and my wife as weft or as warp
And wi' you and your fiddle and wi' me and my harp
We have woven good stuff and are well satisfied
That with love and with kindness 'twas thoroughly dyed!



LINES

*To Mr. David Duncan, General Hospital, Winnipeg,
mailed 26th August, 1919.*

DAVID'S FRIEN'

TUNE: "Duncan Gray."

DAVID Duncan's got a frien,
Ha, ha the testing o't:
Frien'ship doesna wear a screen
Ha, ha investing o't;
Smiling face and open haun,
Writing sangs to beat the baun,
Whistling as he's hameward gaun,—
Ha, ha the resting o't.

David Duncan's lying in?
Ha, ha the question o't:
Ae leg waitin' on its twin
Ha, ha the best ane o't.
When it's hame, look out for squalls,
Music like Scotch waterfalls,
Strathspeys, reels, and hooch's appalls,—
Ha, ha the least ane o't.

David Duncan, an elderly Scotsman, was skilful with the violin, and was fond of Scottish music and rhymes. He and Mr. Thomson always had a happy time when they met.



PEACE IS NOT YET

PEACE is not yet though world-wide war is over
And peace is signed by Allies and the Hun:
No saviour of this world can we discover
To calm men's storm-tossed souls tho' vict'ry's won.

The essential of peace—unselfish kindness—
Has been dissolved, brute passions now replace:
Rage rampant yet impotent in its blindness,
Eradicating love in human race.

For genuine "peace on earth," good Lord, we pray:
Soon let it come that we may see the day.

LINES

*Written at instance of, and for, Miss Lottie Pearl Shuttleworth, student at Normal, attending the College,
by her old friend.*

*M.A.C.—C.P.R.—SEED SPECIAL

TWENTIETH century! all, all aboard!

Hasten we onward from darkness to light,
Science and art helping us in the fight:
Ignorance now we can hardly afford.

Arts agricultural last in the race,
Scientists helping us all they are worth,
Solving the problems in old Mother Earth;
M.A.C. students now making the pace,—

Soil and seed problems are solved, and what then?
Saunders, and Bedford, and Black should rejoice.
Sing we their praises with heart and with voice:
These, and some others, are our greatest men.

Forefathers farmed by the old "rule of thumb."
Honour, however, to those who did that,
Suff'ring themselves though outsiders grew fat:
Doers were they as they made the flail hum.

Hasten! seed special, yet humbly advance:
As teachers you go, but bear ye in mind
Learners out West, aye the best you can find,
Have kept the pot boiling to give us a chance.

Seed, and the secrets surrounding its life,
Fertilization, fecundity, birth,—
These understood, with rejoicing and mirth,
Spread the glad news to each child, man, and wife.

Animal husbandry too, you expound.
Why not teach how to improve human kind?
Looking for model, have me in your mind:
Better old specimen scarce could be found.

Speed ye, good special! Your guide-lights keep bright!
Bear safely teachers of life's first of arts.
Haply your passengers' teaching imparts
Love of all nature to lead to the Light.

5th June, 1911.

*Manitoba Agricultural College.

—†—

LINES

*To Mr. David Duncan, General Hospital, Winnipeg,
mailed 29th August, 1919.*

LABOUR DAY PARADE, AND VISIT OF PRINCE OF WALES

TUNE. "Tullochgorum."

I'LL sing a sang of sympathy
E'en for mysel' and Davie D.,
And folk in sim'lar plight as we
Wha canna gang to shows, man.
September first brings trades' parade,—
Flags and floats for tools of trade.
We're vexed if they are underpaid
And forced to live on brose man.
On ninth or tenth comes Prince of Wales,
Who in gilt coach his plight bewails,
Because high birth tied to his tails
To freedom never rose man.

O poor but honest folk are free
Compared to any royalty
Or other sphere of high degree
Thrust on them prematurely:
The Prince of Wales, quite recently,
Made "L.L.B." and eke "K.C."
And Barrister,—in minutes three,—
Pure aliases surely.
Hurrah! let us in Winnipeg
Put overalls upon his leg
And so that he need never beg,
Make him a farmer purely!

LINES

*To Mr. David Duncan, General Hospital, Winnipeg,
mailed 2nd September, 1919.*

LABOUR DAY

SEPTEMBER morn came in at first
As tho' sky's waterworks had burst:
But afterwards earth seemed at ease
And dried up things with Western breeze.
The gladsome trees their branches waved
For Labour Day's performance saved,
And workers held their festival
In ways they'll cheerfully recall.
For Labour Day was never meant
To lay up stores of discontent,
But to rejoice that girls and boys
Had work to do as if 'twere toys:
For work aye done as if 'twere play
Brings happiness worth half the pay.

LINES

*To Mr. David Duncan, General Hospital, Winnipeg,
mailed 5th September, 1919.*

THE PRINCE

DEAR Dave, when all is said and done
Our Queen Victoria's greatgrandson
Is just like other boys we know
Who fought and conquered freedom's foe.

Nor waur nor better aff is he
Than sons of yours or R.B.T.:
In fact, dear frien', he's no sae free
To come or gang as you or me,

For auld tradition's apron strings
Bind him to wed with kin of kings
Whereas when you and I were young
Our arms around the best we flung.

In this way we improved the breed:
And brawn and brain gave strength and speed,
Twa requisites a Scotchman feels
To play or dance strathspeys or reels.

But come now, fill your cup or can:
We'll drink a health to this young man;
One step t'wards brotherhood he'll bring,—
God bless the Prince of Wales,—and King!



TRUE LOVE

WHEN true love is pure and strong
And two lovers young and brave
It were folly to prolong
Their sweet desire, as one to live:
For the fruit of love is life
And eternal life is love
And the wedded man and wife
Have found creation's treasure trove.

When the flame of love divine
Bridged our lives from heart to heart
I was yours and you were mine
In welded love that none could part.
Many years of fruitful love
Since the day we were involved
Unto us those good words prove
That God is Love, and heav'n is solved.

LINES

To my Dear Wife.

I knew she loved me well
Ere yet I knew my heart:
But lost her, then could tell
Of wounds from Cupid's dart.

Unconsciously her charms
Had settled in my breast,
And then their fierce alarms
Gave me no peace or rest.

For me, all, all was lost
Did I not find my love:
The world aside I tossed,—
For her alone I strove,

And from her gentle voice
And from her love-lit eyes
I gleaned those heav'nly joys
Of love that never dies.

**LINES**

*To Mr. David Duncan, General Hospital, Winnipeg,
mailed 9th September, 1919.*

SEPTEMBER NINTH AND TENTH

LET us record in book of days
A day of days above all praise,
When sons of toil and son of kings
Join hands, co-workers in good things.

September ninth is now serene
As it was not on Flodden's Green,
And oh how different the scene,—
 No Scotch king slain:
Instead antipathy is laid.
Of kings and princes none afraid:
By kiss or handshake none betrayed.

September tenth "The Conqueror" died,
Of whom the world was terrified:
September tenth we hail with pride
 A prince of peace,—
A peace he truly helped to bring
And so revived the song we sing
"God bless the Prince of Wales"—and King,
 With love's increase.

On 9th and 10th September, 1919, the Prince of Wales was in Winnipeg: 9th September, 1513, King James IV of Scotland was killed at Flodden, and on 10th September, 1087, William the Conqueror died.

A RESURRECTION

THE trembling leaves just ere they fall
Inspire my song: I praise them all.
They give me joy since in the bud
Till now they fall bereft of blood.
Exposed to ev'ry wind that blew
E'en sustenance from storms they drew,
And clinging to the parent tree
Gave thrills to pure maternity.
They waved to little birds to come
And underneath them make their home:
There, sheltered from the fierce sun-rays
The birdies bred and sang in praise.
Oh trees! though trembling leaves now fall,
A resurrection comes to all.

LINES

*To Mr. David Duncan, General Hospital, Winnipeg,
mailed 7th September, 1919.*

AULD Nick got in some coal last night:
Or was it Sunday morning?
The rumbling o't gied me a fright—
I'm Nickie-ben aye scorning:
As loads and loads roared down the chute
The flames lit up yon region.
Of firemen covered owre wi' soot
There must have been a legion.

It must have been hard coal you know
Because it made such rumbling,
And those who piled it down below
Kept up a waefu' grumbling.
I'm much relieved at what I heard
For, "Deutschland uber Alles"
Was not the language of Scotch Bard
Or any of our Allies.

P.S.—I trust that the great storm did not affect you!

LINES

*To Mr. David Duncan, General Hospital, Winnipeg,
mailed 8th September, 1919.*

THE PRINCE'S HAND SHAKE

LET other nations understand
That by our Prince's crushed right hand
Our loyalty's personified
And in his royalty we're dyed.

Allowing both hands to be crushed
Let treasonable thoughts be hushed
For lo! he puts his hands in ours
Resigning ancient princely pow'rs.

Let us the name of king hold fast
If but to shew our King not last
In sacrificing selfish ways
For service in these troubled days.

Thus Brotherhood can not disown
A king or cadger for its own,
And soon the King of Kings may claim
A whole world saved in this sweet name.



LINES

*To Mr. David Duncan, General Hospital, Winnipeg,
mailed 12th September, 1919.*

OUT ON BAIL

DEAR Frien: The strike misleaders aff
On bail may now true freedom quaff,
And, gratefully, make people laugh
At their misleading folly,—
And teach, instead of "nothing do,"—
"Keep working: that will bring you through
Victoriously, quite jolly."

All working with one end in view,—
 That each and all be leal and true
 And love and fellowship renew
 In this disrupted world,—
 That would be reconstructiveness
 That all should pray for, all should bless
 With freedom's flag unfurled.



HE DANCED WI' ME

SCOTTISH TUNE: "*He's O'er the Hills, That I Lo'e Weel.*"

PRELUDE AND CHORUS:

He danced wi' me, he danced wi' me,
 Prince Edward of Wales frae o'er the sea:
 Oh I'll rejoice till day I die
 That Prince of Princes danced wi' me.

The great war won and hearts at ease,
 Our good King's son came o'er the seas
 As comrade, friend, his only plea,
 And I rejoice, he danced wi' me.

To our dear boys on Flanders' fields
 This kindly Prince his homage yields,
 And faring forth their friends to see
 Came Prince of Wales,—and danced wi' me.

Oh can we gauge the woe or joy
 That thrills the soul of yon dear boy?
 Our gallant dead beyond the sea,
 They died for him who danced wi' me.

September 1919.

Edward, Prince of Wales, in September 1919 at a ball at Government House in Winnipeg, danced with Miss Christie, daughter of the Minister of Westminster Church. That young lady, of retiring disposition, modestly attired, and somewhat hidden in the crowd, was noticed by the Prince, and promptly selected for the dance. Miss Christie's brother Fleming was in 1917 killed at the war.

LINES

*To Mr. and Mrs. James Hunter, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan,
13th September, 1919.*

PRINCE EDWARD

WHAT'S this we read in this day's news?
Has Saskatoon imperial brews
Drawn from her humble namesake's thews,
That innocent wee berry?

Or is it that her folk gaed daft
As loyal hearts grew young and saft
And with a royal Prince they laughed
And gloriously grew merry?

Prince Edward waves his swagger cane
And lo! the folk are young again
And wine of joy flees to the brain
As much as each can carry.

Against Huns' second crucifix,
We, milk of human kindness mix
On battle fields or playing tricks,
Nor prince from peasant know, man.

Still comrades all in peace or war,
On western plains or fields afar,
Our happiness we needna mar
But brotherhood we seek, man.

Thus each for all and all for each
Our kings and princes surely teach:
E'en ministers this gospel preach,—
Brotherhood, Messiah's plan.

CHANGING

I see the leaves are falling
And birds are passing by:
Another sphere is calling
To them. You ask me why?

The leaves have done their duty
In shelt'ring birds, you know,
And clothed the trees with beauty,
So now to rest they go.

The birds obeying nature
Have raised their young in peace,
And, migratory creature,
Lead them across the seas.

And you and I are changing
In many, many ways,
Our souls and bodies ranging
In search of better days.

The better days are coming
Would we but take God's cure
And busily keep humming
With souls and bodies pure:

For we were born creators
Of laws to guide our life
And they alone are traitors
Who by brute strength survive.

As youngest of the nations
Canadians ought to show
By peaceful regulations
How nations ought to grow.

Mechanic, merchant, farmer,
The writer ought to know,

That brotherhood is warmer
When each withholds a blow.

So in ways democratic
Appoint our wisest men
To stow strife's tools in attic
And restfulness regain.

All work should be a plaything
From which we live and thrive,
And not a hard all day thing
To keep us just alive.

By peaceful, loving progress
Millennium at last
Will come in time, and no less,
For nothing goes so fast.



LINES

*To Mr. David Duncan, General Hospital, Winnipeg,
mailed 15th September, 1919.*

My dear and erstwhile gay old cock
I long to hear you crow:
Your chanticleer would mine provoke
To cock-i-leery-law!

Yours aye the spirit of the game,
Mine of the midden bird,
When you struck up,—I needna name:
My reeling was absurd.

But hoots man! likewise hang it a',
We've had a glorious time:
We hit the high notes great or sma'
When we were in our prime.

OUR COMMUNITY CLUB

COMMENT I

COME comrades and use the Community Club
To build up a new wheel of life from the hub:
New spokes, tyres and fellow~~s~~ we've got to provide
Ere out of war's welter to safety we ride.

To wield the Club well we must strengthen our arms
And use first of arts to draw strength from the farms;
Then trades in their order will follow again
And parts for our new wheel of life we'll obtain.

Weld the spirit of peace to the spirit of pride:
Then lay all the spirits of evil aside.
Let industry's wealth, like the blood, circulate
That none need be hungry and none may breed hate.

There is room in this world for each child that is born
To stand up alone, and not tread on one's corn.
But to unify all like the spokes in a hub
Bind all with good fellows, and tyre with the Club.

16th September, 1919.
To Mr. George Fisher.

A SIMPLE STORY, MINE

I

POWER loom tenter was my Dad;
Hand loom weaver, he, as lad.
Recognized in early days
Leader in the village ways:
Precentor in the Eastwood Kirk,
Faithful with his choir he'd work;
Organized and trained the bands,
Flute, string, or brass good in his hands.
The knowing ones felt no surprise

When Dad was led to take a rise:
As manager of Glasgow mill
He shewed humanity and skill.

II

5TH APRIL, 1847

I was born in Pollokshaws,
Subject to its ways and laws:
In a family of nine
Truly I was third in line.
Nicknamer's work is very droll
And he, or she, had named me "Doll."

III

In my school days 'twas cure or kill,
And my first teacher filled the bill:
With ruler, pointer, cane or strap,
His trembling victim he would rap.
Thanks, thanks to him that I'm untaught
And seeds of genius (!) brought to naught.
Nathless my body won the palm
And I was nicknamed "Puddin' Sam";
While in the house, quite helpful grown
My sister named me "Grannie Gowan."

IV

1859

When twelve years old I joined the mill
And at hard work enjoyed my fill.
Apparently I grew in grace
And then was judged by mien and face;
For Nemesis still quite uncanny
At that time named me "Gentle Annie."
And as to height was asked by men
Was't "ten foot five or five foot ten?"

V

Attending night school for a while
Brought me on culture's road a mile,
But of that much I scarcely brag,—
My nickname then was "Charlie Wag."

VI

The weaving trade's of first import:
We'd all go nude if 'twere na for't.
From step to step I reached my trade:
Of no power loom was I afraid,
But gloried in the lappet line
Where genius with arts combine
To emulate old nature's laws
And so thus gains the world's applause.
The lappet wheel, jacquard and loom
Combined, gave skill and hand play room,
And from designer's pencilled thought
Were lovely figured fabrics wrought.
Whate'er God wills, create He can
By his own male and female-man.

VII

1870

Love for my work and godly woman
Broke down my health, I was but human,
And ere recov'ry was complete
And I again upon my feet
My Dad and I had formed a plan
And business of our own we ran.
Engaged with Dad in this confab
He called me "Philosophic Rab."

VIII

1880

It ran successfully ten years
Till accident destroyed our gears,
Broke in my head, disturbed my brain
And I was ne'er the same again.
Ah! money ne'er can compensate
For broken health and broken pate.

IX

1874

One thing I might have said before:
I had been wed in sev'nty-four,

And from that loving contact we
Have had eight bairns, my wife and me.

X

1884

With mem'ry and with muscle gone,
For business I was overthrown,
And in a frantic fit of fear
Threw up the sponge and came o'er here.

XI

A family of nine, we planned
To throw ourselves upon the land!
Yet for some reason not explained
A homestead could not be obtained:
But I was introduced to "Scarth"
Who seemed to manage crofters' earth,
And while we waited on this man
Diphtheria came and spoiled our plan.

XII

In hospital we nursed our dears
But lost a boy of just four years.
Recov'ry from disease is slow:
We bowed our heads to this first blow,
But held to faith in mother earth,
And, trusting God, "served him with mirth."

XIII

One year we lived in Winnipeg
And neither had to starve or beg.
Took exercise! by sawing wood,
And earned enough to purchase food,
In dear John Marshall's bake-house yard.
(John's record's high in my regard).
When winter came and cold cut keen,
Got indoor work wi' Jamie Steen,
Another man whom I esteem
And vow he was cream-de-la-cream.
His "hard times come again no more"

Oft soothed me as he sang next door.
While cheery word from "Captain Clark"
Sent me home whistling like a lark.

XIV

As messenger for Jamie Steen
Two trips stand out clear and serene:
A jar of "Scotch" to his sick clerk—
Diphtheria laid him off from work;
A note to wife of soldier bold,—
Of how he fought and fell it told,
And tenderness no doubt would mark
His tale of wounded Captain Clark.

XV

I hankering after bit of land,
A friend held out a helping hand;
And Keith and Riddell and Captain Clark
Thought in his scheme I should embark:
The Fall of eighty-five drew near
And we prepared North West to steer.

XVI

But my good friend had still to wait
Till we closed Exhibition's gate.
And here a funny thing took place
I think upon with smiling face.
One day my duty was to be
To take the cash or turn the key.
So when the Premier's coach came through
I held him up as I would you,
And would not let his cab'net pass
Unless he handed me the brass!
So there they had to sit, not glum,
Till Acton Burrows he had come
And took responsibility
From shoulders of yours, R.B.T.

XVII

No! I have never learned you see
What nickname they had given to me,

But let me say with smiling face
They offered me another place
Which I refused with many thanks,
Then hied me from Red River's banks.

XVIII

With steadfast faith and cheerful hearts,
Apprenticed to the "First of Arts,"
In coaxing mother earth for food
We later on made fairly good.
Yet here and now I wish to say
In early days it did not pay,
For (A) winter severe was slow
And old Jack Frost was loath to go;
While (B) the human bugs were such
That they alone grew fat and rich.
From earliest days till German war
The settlers had a fight galore:
But glory be their fighting strength
Is being organized at length
And thoughtful men and righteous laws
May fortify producers' cause.

XIX

ROOKHURST

1885-1908

From varying opportunity
We had a live community:
In home-life hospitality;
Athletics, no brutality;
At social gatherings all were glad—
Attractive program always had;
And harmony we always knew
Would not be spoiled by "mountain dew."
Folks of all nations and all faiths
Mixed in at weddings, births and deaths.
So well nigh quarter century
A happy life led R.B.T.,
And as guessing friend supposes,
Truth to tell, was nicknamed "Moses."

XX

Orations crammed with "I's" and "We's"
Oft hide life's many mysteries;
While peroration's resume
May help to clear them up a wee.

XXI

A saying old now comes with force
"The grey mare was the better horse."

XXII

Six years of wedded love's success
Had filled our home with happiness.
By railroad crash all things were changed
And everything was disarranged:
The shock sent my dear wife to bed
When I was brought with broken head.
Yet life and love and faith and hope
Proved in her hands a saving rope
To which she held while I was weak
And saved us all just so to speak.
No better Mother trod this earth
Since Mary gave our Saviour birth.

XXIII

Courageously my dear wife met
The tortures of her man's backset:
And fearlessly she crossed the sea
With seven helpless bairns and me;
And truly passed through very hell
Before diphtheria's sounding knell;
While thunderstorm played overhead
And threatened immigration shed.
Thank God for loving heart so true
That with the years aye greater grew,
Of inspiration aye the source
When battling natural ills of force.
With backward glance again we see
Great Mother's fight for progeny.

LINES

*To Mr. David Duncan, General Hospital, Winnipeg,
mailed 19th September, 1919.*

THE GRANNIE AND THE GROUCH

THERE was a happy group quite near the Prince,
Their hearts and hands atingling for his touch:
For sure those ladies would not make him wince
By squeezing his sore fingers overmuch.

Now one sweet Grannie, lame but very loyal,
As "Edward P.," the good, was passing by,
Thrust out her hand and he, with action royal,
Took her's in his and squeezed it on the sly.

The incident displeased one who saw her,
Who sharply said: "My! but you must be Scotch!"
Grannie replied: "I'd four sons at the war,
Wha helped to save a' your anes frae the Bosch!"

The Grannie referred to was Mrs. Margaret Prentice, the very pick of Scottish grannies.—R.B.T.

MY WILL

20th September, 1919.

IF I have any worldly gear—
I don't know all I have—
I leave it all without a fear
To her we all must love.
She has been faithful to us all,
Gave service without stint,—
On Jack and Will and Jim I call
To see her settled in't:
My presentation desk and chair;
United Grain Growers' Stock;

Of real estate my little share;
And that's all, "chock-a-block";—
I leave to Lily Gordon T.,
My daughter and my pride,
And may she always happy be
As maid or some one's bride.
My wife and I are one you see
And to this "Will" we both agree.

R. B. THOMSON.

(Codicil here impliedly suggesting publication of poems).

LINES

*To Mr. David Duncan, General Hospital, Winnipeg,
mailed 22nd September, 1919.*

ANOTHER PRINCE

WHILE lying here, as you up there,
I like to hear the news,
How folk are fending everywhere
In kilts, or wearing trews.
It pleases me most awfully
To hear of Edward "P."
Enjoying himself lawfully
'Mang folk like you and me.

My minister was here yestreen—
I mean some days ago—
And spoke of him just like a frien,
With features all aglow.
He told me how with kindly glance
This Prince of high degree
Had asked his daughter for a dance
With kind humility.

When "P." came o'er the frienly main—
Now cleared o' submarines—
He came and found his ain again,
A colony of friens.
To service this dear boy has come,
Not homage to demand
But to receive a welcome home
By proffering his hand.

Another Prince I'd like to see
As heartily desired,
The Prince of Christianity
Whom Germans had despised.
No, not alone stands Germany
As antichristian
For Christendom so called 's ajee
And 'gainst the "son of man."
Oh that the world would subject be
To Him and what He said:
His word would calm the troubled sea,—
" 'Tis I, be not afraid."

LINES

*To Mr. David Duncan, General Hospital, Winnipeg,
September 1919.*

MISSING THE FUN

WE'RE missing a' the fun these days,
There's nae twa ways o' that,
But memory in many ways
Makes me throw up my hat.

For instance: ere I gaed to schuil
I flew my dragons heich,
Or rode my faither to the mill,—
Oh my, but he was skeigh!

When I escaped schuilmaister's claws
The fun I had was great,

(He used the ruler, pointer, taws,
And disciplined with hate).

High spy, the rounders, prison base,
The shinty, bools, craw's nest,
The wrang sow by the lug, first place,—
Rough play but played wi' zest.

Selah.

Hurrah for ten years in the mill!
Worked ten hours ev'ry day:
Praise to hereditary skill
I counted it but play.

Then ten more years mill furnishing,
When crash! a broken head,
And four years cracked skull burnishing
Ere I my wings could spread.

'Tis over thirty-five years now
Since we arrived right here:
Yet as we prospered at the plow,
We joined in many a cheer.

We're missing a' the fun these days,
There's nae twa ways o' that,
But memory in many ways
Makes me throw up my hat.

LINES

*To Mr. David Duncan, 10 Minnewaska Court, Winnipeg,
mailed 23rd September, 1919.*

HAME FRAE THE HOSPITAL

I hear you're hame and no sae lame,
And perky wi' your ain guid dame;
Instead o' wi' a nurse?
Gin that be true I'll hae a brew
And drink a health to her and you:
I'm sure I might do worse.

Make no mistake and make a break
Or try again your leg to shake
 Before the New year's day,
For that's the time you feel sublime
And shew you're only in your prime:
 Or is it Hogmanay?



THE TUG O' WAR

THERE is a famous tug o' war
Between employees and employer
 Which I think scarcely fair:
The rope itself is the reward
For which contestants pull so hard
 And pull as in despair.

Employees have the shorter end,—
For that I do not them defend—
 Employer miles to spare:
Employer had the rope to spin,
Design, the hemp and winding pin,
 And chose his work to share.

Employees, minus something good,
Content with water, wood and food,
 Caught busy spinner's eye:
And he with orders to complete
Not thinking they'd sense to compete
 Invited them to try.

He taught them how to spin each thread
Or thick or thin, and then to spread
 And join so many ply:
And soon they had a rope well made,
The very best of cable laid,
 Some mariner would buy.

'Twas then employees had a thought.—
One end of that big coil they caught
 And off with it did run:

The spinner tried to save it all
And then cut loose and let them fall,
But they said it was fun.

1919.



CHRISTIAN KEYDOM,

PERFECT FREEDOM

SINCE our freedom was defended,
Since the Germans sued for peace,
Since that war for freedom ended
With a sudden armistice,—
There has been no peace or quiet
In the nations of the world,
And, 'twere folly to deny it,
Perfect freedom is imper'l'd.

Now, what is this perfect freedom
That's so much to be desired?
It is using Christian key-dom:
Op'ning views to be admired,
Op'ning minds to righteous thinking,
Op'ning X-rays from above,
Op'ning judgments, eyes unblinking
On Goodwill and Peace and Love.

We, the hands of the Creator,
Thankful for His providence,
Op'ning earth and air and water
For our needs, with common sense,
Our brute strength not over-rating
But in nature's own good time,
Gradually ills abating,
Poverty, disease and crime.

1919.

OUR COMMUNITY CLUB

COMMENT II

THE community alliance,
Sect that we've had in each kirk,
Needs a safety-valve appliance
To blow off the things that irk.

That old icy feature "status"
That kept kindred far apart
Should no more again inflate us
If we've had a change of heart:

For the truth, though truth be driest,
Is: Humanity will gain
When the humblest to the highest
Are linked up in endless chain.

1919.



OUR COMMUNITY CLUB

COMMENT III

THE community club
It has long been the rule
"Home of good cheer" to dub,
At the wee rural school;
At the place where I dwelt
For a good many years,
Where on Sundays we knelt
To get rid of some fears:
And on many more nights
In the houses around
The communion delights
Were invariably found.

To those meetings, much more
Came the spirit of peace;
And when full to the door,
Good spirits did increase:

The humblest, the boldest
 And all others between;
 The youngest and oldest
 All quite neat and serene;—
 There the spirit of fun
 And the spirit of song
 When the fun was begun
 And the nights they were long.

There, the spirit of ill
 In the mind had no chance
 In the now despised drill
 Of the old country dance:
 The fiddler and fiddle
 No doubt always were there
 Aye solving the riddle
 Oh how can you kill care?
 Then a song and a game
 And some good home-made cake
 And a chat, seldom tame,—
 The road homeward they take.

The community club
 It has long been the rule
 "Home of good cheer" to dub,
 At the wee rural school.

1919.

• OUR COMMUNITY CLUB

COMMENT IV

A community club is a great institution
 Which ought to conduce to millennial solution
 By pooling all talents, the fruit of the spirit,
 Where each can imbibe some of everyone's merit.
 The earth, air and water give joy to each being
 Endowed with the senses of hearing and seeing:
 And oh! that men's minds and surplus wealth would scatter
 And circulate freely like earth, air and water.

By natural laws wealth is stored in creation
But is taken therefrom by the whole population:
Then the whole population should flourish thereby,
And the surplus, if any, laid thriftily by
For behoof of the many, so no one need cry
That a few are found stopping the nation's supply,
And all ought to know this: that the surplus in store
Is in Government hands just a great reservoir.

1919.

OUR COMMUNITY CLUB

COMMENT V

*Resolved that "Each child is worth two thousand dollars to
the government." Remark overheard on
C.P.R. Station, Fall of 1884.*

Our community club is a club for re-mixing
The minds of our members on things for re-fixing.

Each child that is born, as asset to this nation,
And prospective defender of wealth in each station,
Can't be too well preserved, well equipped, or well boarded,
And should have a first lien on the wealth that is hoarded.

To whom credit is due well let credit be given
But there's little credit due C*****s in heaven,
Why, what do you mean, do not some make restitution,
And is that not enough to earn safe retribution?

Well C***** himself seemed to think it was not right
That the poor men they half starved for such knaves had
to fight.

Oh! I really can't follow your complaining murmur!
Well, follow C***** and you'll even feel warmer.

Now I am sorry that "this sort of thing" had to stop,
But the subject grew hot so we just let it drop.

OVER THE SEA

(SONG)

THE Prince of Wales has come over the sea
To shew how humble a great prince can be:
His heart and hand he now submits to thee,
O Canada! Britain's royal daughter.

Thy sons, O Canada, fought for the free
And saved their honour with true majesty:
Now kings and princes thy home life to see
Come humbly from over the water.

From over the sea, from over the sea
Has come our Prince to pay homage to thee:
From over the sea, from over the sea
True kingliness saved from great slaughter.

1919.

**A LUDENDORFAN STORY**

Now the lude and orphan maker
Has his story all in print,
And the army undertaker
Has official figures in't;
And the ups and downs of battles
Have been duly analyzed,
With destructiveness of chattels
Of "the enemy," well prized.
We, "the enemy," may ponder
With a sort of an amaze
At this German gen'ral's wonder
At the failure of wrong's ways:
For the world had made advances
Since the peace of seventy-one
And the militarist prances
Of the Germans overdone

When they listened to Bernhardi
And they toasted "to the day"
And were led to disregard aye
Old Britannia's waterway.

1919.

OUR COMMUNITY CLUB

COMMENT VI

THE community club has been in existence
In the wee touns o' Scotland since John Knox's time:
But only through childhood it had its persistence,—
When his schooltime was over each hiked for the dime.

As joint heirs to all that this good earth possesses
The children should aim to possess it in peace,
And to see that through life education progresses
And that peace and goodwill throughout life shall not
cease.

With this end in view and no lives counted losses
Let fair play and justice to all be the aim,
And with eyes all the while on the big and wee crosses
That tell of lives given in playing the game.

Internecine strife between masses and classes
Shews their education had no proper aim,
And resulted in conduct like that of wild asses,
From college bred teachers and preachers the same.

To train up a child in the way he should go, Sir,
From the day he is born to the day he will die,
Is to see that he learns well the great thing to know, Sir,
Is to see that his neighbour's not hungry or dry.

1919.

HELLO YOU KIDDIES!**I**

HELLO you kiddies! Here you are
Where you have got to live:
In short while you have travelled far
Much happiness to give.

You/Ma and Pa are not alone
In welcoming you here:
But Registrar and Doc Saw Bone
As soon as you appear.

This Registrar and Doctor Bone
Now represent the state:
To them your value is well known,—
Their estimate is great.

Newspapers too announce your birth;
The merchants give three cheers;
The Governments join in the mirth;—
Good guardianship appears! ?

II

Hello you kiddies! Here you are:
How do you like home rule?
You've learned to walk and talk, my star!
And now you go to school.

(Are you well nourished, strong and bright
And clean and well attired?
Or have you been neglected quite,
Until you've to be hired?)

Well, there you learn to read and write
And use the pen and ink:
But learn this thing with all your might,—
To think and think and think.

For thinking is the only road
By which you come to know
The value of the gifts of God
As through the world you go.

HELLO YOU KIDS!**I**

HELLO you kids! Now in the schools
And subject to their laws and rules,
Yes, don't you think you would be fools
 To break school regulations?
Of course you do! Ev'n out of doors
You keep those rules in marking scores,
Or on gymnasium carpet floors,
 Nor yield to fool temptations.

This sure foundation keep in mind:
These school relationships are kind
And those who break them sure to find
 A public condemnation.
Discrimination is not there,
To bring a schoolmate to despair:
Each does his part, each has his share
 In public estimation.

In after life still play the game
And scorn to bring your school to shame:
Law-breaking leaders—much to blame—
 Are sure to tempt you sorely.
The wheels of life thrown out of gear
Bring hardship, early death and fear,
But peace on earth and goodwill here
 Make progress, slow, but surely.

II

Hello you kids! Now in your teens,
You know what honest head work means.
Look up from books, look through life's screens
 And choose some undertaking O.
The farmer leads in first of arts,
The weaver clothes our hidden parts,
The builder saves from climate's darts,
 Three firstlings in home making O.

Remember we're creators all
And had to rise from first great fall,
When we were beasts 'mong great and small
And had to do some climbing O.
Our great progenitors fell to
And learned to think like I and you
And from dark ages pulled right through
To highest heights—ev'n rhyming O!

From lowest swamps to highest skies,
Inventors helped us how to rise
And ev'ry age has brought surprise
Till what we now inherit O.
Now here you are just at the door
To see the world in an uproar,
And your best help we now implore
By using all with merit O.

The greatest war on earth is past,
The criminal held hard and fast:
Now nail your colours to the mast
Your sentiments aye telling O.
Still sing Britannia rules the waves,
Canadians never shall be slaves,
And by her sons in foreign graves
Our life work,—wrongs repelling O.

III

Hello you kids! The world is round
And turns in four and twenty hours
Exposing ev'ry bit of ground
To radiance of heav'nly powers.

This is a Providential move
That never stops to take a rest
And well may represent the love
Of Him who does it for the best.

This steady movement all the time
Without a stop or turning back

Gives confidence in ev'ry clime
To whosoever keeps the track.

The end in view? Ah, who can say?
But this we know as time has passed
So long as men kept in right way
They bloomed comparatively fast.

Presumptuous Germany of late
Tried to control all right of way
By means of brutal strength and hate
And where oh where is she to-day?

Be wise, be vigilant, be sure
You do not interfere with time:
Progressing with the world may cure
Its poverty, disease and crime.

IV

Hello you kids! My knowledge share
Nor of your future life despair:
Your paths are smoother I declare
Than paths of your forefathers O.
Your great grand Dads they could not fly
Across the seas, or mountains high,
Or many ills of life defy
That history forgathers O.

Though life is short it may be sweet
Should you some other ills defeat:
For conqu'ring ills is drink and meat
To Christian lads and lasses O.
To follow footsteps of your Dad
Is natural to lass and lad
But if there's something in't that's bad
Well, pass the tempting glasses O.

Ten years I spent in power loom mill,—
Enjoyed hereditary skill;
Mill furnishing add to the bill,—
Quarter century passes O.

Then I met with an accident:
For four years tried to circumvent
The ill effects. On vict'ry bent
I sighed for prairie grasses O.

The seas I crossed in eighty-four
And knocked at Manitoba's door:
Took homestead and had work, and more,—
Had happiness and pleasure O.
No more important work is done
'Tween rising and the setting sun
Than raising food, grade number one:
It is the Empire's treasure O.

So there you are. I'll not advise:
Work of the best may not suffice
With those who more the dollar prize
Or aim to be a banker O.
Thus you I partly tell my life
Spent with my children and my wife,
And knowing much of worldly strife,
Old Mother Earth I thank her O.

V

Hello you kids! Your ears come lend
While you have time to spare
And learn to know what's man's chief end
And for that end prepare.

Had all the kids that ever were
Been taught and trained aright
From points of vantage everywhere
That end would be in sight.

For lo! the earth, the sky, the sea,
And all that in them is,
Were here and man had got the key
To all this merchandise.

Instead of working hand in hand
For Glory of all Good,

Brute strength made weak ones understand
Chief end of man was food;

Whereas chief end of man is work
Creative, so that time
Will sure disclose the things that lurk
In womb of world sublime;

And man will prove that God is Love
And Love be justified.
For who was He that reigns above
But Love personified?

VI

Hello you kids! Who live in towns
Nor much of nature see,
Don't think that farmers' kids are clowns:
They're just as wise as thee.

Birds, beasts, and reptiles are their books;
They think on what they see;
Know usefulness of earth and brooks,
And value ev'ry tree.

Now here is one of nature's plays
As staged on my homestead.
Applies to life in many ways
If understood when read,—

A gopher challenged by a crow
Put up a goodly fight:
But lifted high by tail, you know,
Then dropped, was cruel plight.

They faced each other on the ground,
In that way seemed a match,
But when the gopher turned around
The crow its tail would catch,

And lifting it again on high
Again would let it drop.
This sev'ral times as I drew nigh.
For me they did not stop.

Then suddenly a thing occurred:
A hawk flashed from on high,
Picked up the prize from stupid bird
And soared into the sky.

VII

Hello you kids! In summer days
If to the farm you go
You'll see some things in nature's ways
To wonder at you know.

While doing chores I heard a cry
As of babe in distress,
Threw down my load and ran to try
If this was a right guess.

I met a rabbit on the path,
A weasel round its throat:
I whistled on my dog in wrath,
Which came at ambling trot.

The rabbit stood as if in trance,
The weasel dropt t'wards me;
Awakened by the dog's advance
The rabbit turned to flee.

The dog and rabbit out of sight,
The weasel scorned to gee:
Robbed of its prey it showed its spite
And stood and girmed at me!

VIII

Hello you kids! A story hear
About the skunk, a beast to fear
Because it has a fearfu' squirt
To shoot on you vile smelling dirt.

Well, one day we were hauling hay
And our good dog had strayed away
And must have quarrelled with a skunk
For he returned as if blind drunk.

He staggered blindly to a slough
And whined and rolled the whole way through.
Then as we rode upon the load
He followed us along the road.

Now Jerry was a fav'rite dog
Accustomed to a friendly hug
And when he heard a well known yell
Call: Jerry! Jerry! went pell mell:

He rushed into the wide spread arms
Which closed on him—then war's alarms!
On us, who could not help but laugh
As D.'s blank cartridges went aff.

(The above incident happened in the summer of 1887. "D" was Denis Daly, a spirited young Irishman, fond of dogs and hunting. He was residing at the time with Messrs. Roberts in the Rookhurst district southeast of Minnedosa, Manitoba.)

IX

Hello you kids! On leaving school
You're sure to meet friends of misrule.
Against brute strength and souls of clay,
Work, work for joy, not just for pay.

School learning, hardest work of all,
Has shewn you how to rise and fall,
And games have ground you in fair play,
So play life's game without dismay.

Retain respect for old class mates
Or rich or poor—reject class hates—
And reconstruct on your school plan
The nobler race called "fellowman."

For signs of hate appeared of late—
Not only in the German state:
Right in this free Canadian town,
And brotherhood has broken down.

And why? Because a pack of fools
Yelled out: "Come boys lay down your tools!"
And boys? No! men and women too
Obeyed that God forgetting crew.

The innocent ones suffered most
And lives and other things were lost:
Yet worst of all, a cleavage made
That can't be filled by pick and spade.

1919.



LINES

*To Mr. David Duncan, Minnewaska Court,
Winnipeg.*

We are aulder than some neighbours
And have seen a lot of life:
We are resting from our labours
And just courting the guid~~e~~ wife.
She may ca' caresses havers
But there's something in her e'e
And she's thinking o' palavers
When we twa were twenty-three.

You are hame at Minnewaska
And I hear you're sitting up
And your ain dear wife will mask a
Fundamental, cheery cup.
What Sir? Naething should be waistit!
Ye ken fine I'm meanin' tea.
Though I'm no' o'er there to taste it
I'm depending aye on thee.

Something easily digested
Though not quite so nourishing:
Then some troubles are divested
Of the ordinary sting.

Take the seriously comic
If it has the Scottish ring,
And you'll have a tune aomic
Though it's no' the Hielan fling.

P.S.

We haena heard the Gipsy,
But suppose that he's a' richt.
And to shew that we're no tipsy,
Here's to him! and sae guid nicht.

ALL, ALL ABOARD!

WHEN thund'ring guns of blund'ring Huns
Were silenced for all time
And armistice brought kind of peace
And punishment for crime,
With joyful noise we praised our boys—
Those 'specially, "gone West":
They all relied on Him who died,—
Like Him they stood the test.

The Christian world has been imper'l'd
Quite recently I ween:
In very fact it has been cracked
That's easy to be seen.
What then I beg? When Easter egg
Is cracked what do we see?
Nothing but good, the best of food,
On this we all agree.

So let us try with open eye
To profit by this war,
That ne'er again ambitious men
The Christian work may mar.
Let ev'ry birth mean peace on earth,
That goodness may prevail:

"For Service We" the motto be
On ev'ry dinner pail:—

For work alone means crown and throne
According to the Word,
So preach and pray that come it may
By working in accord.
By work on earth comes second birth—
Pure souls for risen Lord:
His mansions fill with right goodwill,
Come on! All, all aboard!

1919.

THANKSGIVING

1919

THANKSGIVING is a righteous act
Which flows, spontaneous, from the heart,
In recognition of the fact
Of Providence's great part.

Creation! who can fathom it
If there was nothing at one time?
Is gifted human being fit
To make from nothing seed sublime?

No! though we cannot picture God,
Creation cannot be denied,
And man hath found it love's abode
And found Christ Love personified.

And we can picture Christ our Lord
And credit Him our second birth—
Birth of the soul, and well afford
To worship Him "and serve with mirth."

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

COMMUNITY spirit
Has had a great shock
And hardly can bear it
Or hatefulness block:
But love has proved strongest
In the war that is past
And sure to live longest
In spirit held fast.

Community spirit,
It never assails
Where lack of some merit
In cases prevails:
Nor teachers nor preachers
Bear hard on the boy,—
For lack of good features
Deprives him of joy.

Community spirit
Is purest when young:
Unburdened with care it
Inflates heart and lung
And left to expand in
A natural way
Produces new brand in
A way that should pay.

1919.

THE CONVENTION

On Education in Citizen Building.

In Nineteen nineteen
Convention serene
Had met in between
East and West seas.

Character building:
Out and in fielding,
Arguments wielding,
Go as you please.

A great convention
With best intention
But no invention
To meet the case.
Most intellectual
But ineffectual:
Though, made perpetual,
May save its face.

Character building
Means virtue shielding,
In young so yielding,
By wisdom's care
And moral suasion
By Love's pervasion
Without evasion
All, all should share.

The parents mainly,
If mated sanely,
However plainly,
Build up the child
Who must inherit
Our fault or merit
From her who bare it
Or clean or soiled.

Selective breeding
And careful feeding
The world is needing
As ne'er before,
And then good teaching
By books and preaching
Will prove far reaching
On moral score.

But, goodness gracious!
The thing fallacious
Is man audacious
 Enough to strain
The young's convictions
That vile restrictions
Are contradictions
 From that refrain.

This is the feature
For grown up creature:
Mind laws of nature
 In spirit world,—
Goodness entailing
Through life prevailing
Is never failing
 Love! not imper'l'd.

1919.



GREAT THOUGHTS THE WARP

GREAT thoughts the warp,
Good words the weft,
 A golden book's created,—
 That often leads
 To noble deeds
 By nobler souls elated.

1919.

HALLOWE'EN 1919

HERE's Hallowe'en what will we dae?
Despite the threats of Mayor Gray
Let's make his effigy of strae

And burn it in the basement O.
Are we young folk to be held up
On only day we haud the whup?
That, that would be a bitter cup
We look on with amazement O.

This is the day we misbehave
And shall we fill a coward's grave?
Nay, nay until the day we shave
Our Hallowe'en we'll haul-a' O.
Come on! shew up wi' candle light,
Pack in one day a year's ill plight:
The balance o't we'll do the right
And discipline we'll swallow O.

Shall turnip field or eke kail yaird
At word of magistrate be spared?
Or must our last bawbee be wared
On what should cost us naething O?
Oh no! we'll haud our Hallowe'en
As for a million years't has been:
Lang after year Nineteen nineteen
We'll think aye on this aething O.

Now let us speak as auld, auld men.
We've had our Hallowe'ens ye ken
And my! but we were wealthy then,
The wealth o' health and freedom O!
Our battle field we kent fu' fine:
Kail custocks stood in battle line
And neeps were big and smooth lang syne
And each had wealth o' feed 'n 'em O.

Then presto! change! and in our hands
Neeps turned to folk frae fairy lands

And down dark roads in noisy bands
Met witches waving torches O.
The eerie sights that I hae seen—
I saw them o'er again yestreen—
The lurid licht frae mouth and een
As wondrous warlock marches O.

Oh Hallowe'en's a bairnies' gift;
Imagination's got a lift:
The bairns themselves gie us a snift
And ask for nuts and apples O.
Disguised,—they scarcely ken themselves:
They're playing bogles, spooks and elves.
Next morning sees our empty shelves
But bairns fou to their thrapples O.

1919.



THE ELEVENTH OF NOVEMBER

At the eleventh hour
Of the eleventh day
The brutal German pow'r
Broke down and passed away:
And "chill November's surly blast"
Blew us a welcome note at last.

Let worldly noises cease
Throughout our Empire wide
And gratitude increase
To those who fought and died:
Two minutes give our minds and souls
To ponder on those honour rolls.

Best epitaph will stay
On yonder foreign grave
For, "Killed in Action," they
Were gloriously brave:
And since they saved the world for Christ,—
With Him and Them, Oh, keep the tryst!

1919.

OUR COMMUNITY CLUB**COMMENT VII**

OUR community club may be likened to nature
Whose trees, shrubs and flow'rs have distinguishing feature
When laid out in parks, on a groundwork of grasses
Whose warning "keep off" is for him who trespasses.

The words "all flesh is grass" should keep ev'ry one humble
Like trees, shrubs and flow'rs who at grasses ne'er grumble
For grasses at work on the very foundations
Provide all in life with abundance of rations.

"Please don't touch the flow'rs," they are ardently wanted:
To beds of good homes they may soon be transplanted
And then by the old copulative conjunction,
Ensure due obedience to flow'r bearing function.

The trees and the shrubs are just big and wee brothers
Who love but to serve without injuring others:
Without grass, flow'rs, trees,—we would never be able
To have dwelling houses or well furnished table.

1919.

**OUR COMMUNITY CLUB****COMMENT VIII**

OUR community club is a friendly society
Returning to school with a childlike propriety,
Imbued with the spirit that school life had fostered
When on the playground for a game we had mustered.

All the children of men should go forth from their schooling
Imbued with school spirit, good fellowship pooling:
For life is a game that is really worth playing,
With the school as the place where foundations are laying.

Steadfast in their love for each other, unyielding
Foundations are laid in true character building:
From whatever the hands find to do taking pleasure,—
Contentment will follow and that in good measure.

Yet don't measure life by the wages you're earning:
That brings about strife and much useless heart burning;
But in cheerful endeavour to make others happy,—
E'en at a "box social" you'll be weighed—a nice chappy.

1919.

THOUGHTS ON CREATION

WE ponder on creation whiles
And wonder at its ways and wiles
And where it leads to, what it means,
And why its law to goodness leans
As seasons come and seasons go
And creatures multiply and grow,
With men apparently supreme
And they unrighteous as a dream.

The earth as now inhabited
Shews how humanity is spread:
A nation here, a nation there
And ev'ry nation in despair
Because forsooth one casts her eyes
On what to her would be a prize.
Another, said to have been cursed,
Among all nations is dispersed.

Each nation claims a fatherland,
A language,—how had these been planned,
Traditions from long ages past,
And habits which they hold to fast,
And laws which citizens obey
And over immigrants hold sway,—
The hardest thing all exiles know—
Compulsory—or home they go.

Each nation seems to have a claim
To independence and a name
And has, or has had boundaries
Which now, alas! are quandaries,
For neighbours have since earliest days
Removed each other's stakes and stays,
Or intermarrying have had feuds
The strongest holding to the goods.

Each nation, too, intuitive
Claims One who made all things that live
And worships Him and calls Him God
And Father, unseen One whose Rod
Approves or disapproves at will
The works of men for good or ill.
And yet all nations fail to see
Solution of "a mystery"?

For common or uncommon sense
Would clearly see without pretence
That leadership to Godly aim
A Godlike people soon would claim
And prophesy and plead for such
And thus with God be put in touch.
Then which of us can think it shame
That God in human likeness came?

And came to shew self-sacrifice
In human life would gain the prize
E'en prize of immortality,
Converse to immorality.
For Goodness is but Godness now
And loyalty to God we vow:
Which means that we accept His Son
And having Him have Three in One,
The Father, Son and Holy Ghost,—
Rejecting Him, salvation's lost.

VOTE !

I

Awa wi' fears! though up in years
We're down on things inhuman:
It canna be for you and me
The right to be untrue man.
So let us baith wi' our last breath
Vote for baith law and order,—
The kirk, the school and no misrule
Within Canadian border.

II

Industriously we've worked our way
Since leaving school till now, man,
And tackled wark in breeks and sark
And sweated at the plow, man.
Then having won tribute "well done
Thou good and faithful servant"
Sit down beside our faithful bride
To rest and be observant.

III

What do we see, baith I and she?
Our counterparts a' striking
Because forsooth frae haun to mouth
Is no just to their liking.
But my! oh my, if they would try
Deserving present blessings
They'd not spend time committing crime
Involved in their transgressings.

IV

For what they did can not be hid:
'Twas suicide and murder.
The old and young were sadly stung
From husbandman to herder.

Hold up your hands! the thug commands
 Before he thinks of shooting:
 But labour thug the progress clogs
 Of food stuff distributing.

V

With sentiment I'm not content
 So I have gone and done it,—
 The only vote that I have got
 Three splendid men have won it:
 For civic chair, the auld Gray May'r;
 A Cameron for schooling;
 A Sullivan with garbage can
 Will stand no silly fooling!

28th November, 1919.



CHAOS

In the year nineteen nineteen society went crazy,
 Destroyed her sweet floral tribute: "she's a daisy"
 And earned for a time the rebuke: she is lazy,
 And, being misled had a very bad time.
 She knew quite correctly that she was a beauty
 But ugly as sin when she failed in her duty,
 Adopting a motto: "Do nothing"—a farce aye
 And always when followed, a dastardly crime.

As a whole our society had no clear objective
 But life seemed worth living apart or collective
 And being free folk how and where was selective
 Each following instinct found something to do.
 The hunter or farmer in lone situations
 Mechanics and merchants in city's creations
 According to choice in their varied relations
 Society was born and in beauty she grew.

But alack! and alas! there are people who grumble
 Instead of,—to side step a hole and be humble,

They plunge right ahead and invariably tumble
Right up to the neck in a terrible mess.
They pull others in who attempt to relieve them;
In telling their story intend to deceive them;
And sympathy solemnly hears and believes them
And brute strength is honoured by folly—no less.

1919.

LINES

*To Mr. James Hunter, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, not
forgetting Hamish, son, Christmas, 1919.*

A merry Christmas may you hae
And eke a Guid New Year.
We're a' gaun toddlin' down the brae
But that without a fear.
Fause prophets aye hae been fu' rife
To frighten folk near out their life
But as for me and my guid wife
We'll sing as lang's we're here.

A merry Christmas to ye a'
And eke a Guid New Year.
Three cornered, fecht wi' gran' snaw ba'
And warm ilk ither's ear.
That would be fun compared to which
The striking folk, likewise the rich,
Wad find themselves a' in the ditch
Unworthy of a tear.

"A Guid New Year to ane an' a'
And mony may you see"
And may ye aye hae plenty snaw
To melt, and mask the tea.
While this fine world gaes birlin' roun'
Folk on the farm, and in the toun
Industriously should earn a crown
Frae yon kind Trinitie.

LINES

To Mr. David Duncan, Winnipeg, Christmas, 1919

DEAR Santa Claus
Abundant cause
Ye hae that now you're resting:
Your music sweet
To hearts and feet
Its silence is the testing,
For man and maid
Now stand dismayed
And think of your retiring
And mind the strains
That held the reins
Strathspeys and reels inspiring.

When in your dreams
The bagpipe screams
You know you've had your innings,
That innocent
Each mind was bent
On exercise, not sinnings:
The country dance,
The joyful prance,
And num'rous evolutions;
Christmas alloy
With New Year's joy—
No modern lude pollutions.

A Guid New Year
And Christmas cheer
I wish ye a' believe me;
And I know this
With welcome kiss
Your folk would a' receive me:
But what's the use;
I'd fyle the house
By dancing and rejoicing
If I ance more
Should tak the floor
And sentiments be voicing.

LINES

*To Mr. and Mrs. George Fisher, acknowledging receipt of
flower brought by Miss Nettie Love, their niece,
Christmas, 1919.*

Love was your messenger
Who brought yon lovely flower:
No lovelier than she,
Your gift to wife and me.

Did she of Bethlehem
Prize gift the wise men bore
As high as she prized them?
Surely she prized them more.

So with your Christmas gift,
Sweet symbol of good will,
We view't with great uplift
And bless the givers still.

Love was your messenger:
She was your delegate;
But she and gift won't blurr
This fact—it's getting late!

**BATTALION COLORS IN CARE OF CHURCH,
WESTMINSTER**

ALL ye who are not color blind
Look up, look up and there you'll find
The symbols of the blood they shed,
White corpuscles and brightest red.
The blue and gold, like sky and star
That roof the tombs where heroes are,
Whose crosses white by day and night
Do tell they died for us and right.

All ye who are not color blind
Look up, look up and there you'll find

The Friend who loved and shewed the way
To save the world ev'n in our day:
Although He hung upon the cross
Meant not His friends should suffer loss
But simply cleared that mystery
"Who dieth thus shall live alway."

1919.

LINES

To Mr. David Duncan, Minnewaska Court, Winnipeg.

HELLO! and yet again hello!
How goes the Minnewaska folk?
They canna say the world goes slow
Or that its progress is a joke.
Na, na, it's gaun too quick for us:
The days gang whirlin' by like fun.
It isna like Westminster bus
Or trolley car when we want one.

If movements of the human race
Would register each day "a gain"
We wadna mind sae much the pace
But gladly would grunt out Amen.
But ev'ry man has got a god?
Or ev'ry nation one at least?
Hence ev'ry one goes his own road
And more or less reveals the beast.

If over all Messiah reigned,
His rule, as God, persistent preached,
Good Spirits, sure, would not be pained
Were peace on earth in this way reached.
But as it is the world seems curst
And people grasp each others' throats.
Some vow it is the awfu' thirst!
While others want their neighbours' goats!

1920.

THE SCHOOL

To mould the mind of humankind
And save from misery and sin
So that the school be not maligned
As soon as working days begin,
No smoother pattern can be made
Than that of Christianity
Whose Founder the foundations laid
Of progress for humanity.
"Peace and good-will" with human skill
Can use the world's enormous stores
And further the Creator's will
That time shall shew those open doors
Through which the aim of life is viewed—
Perhaps all beastliness subdued?

1919.

**STRIKES**

LET him who likes believe in strikes
And vow that they are needed;
And preach and pray that come they may
Till his demand's conceded:
His higher wage will not assuage
The ills of poorer brother
Who has to pay with blank dismay
The granted rise—no other.

Producing food, the highest good
And first of arts, that's granted,
Is what we've got as our key note
If song of life is wanted:
Then knowledge comes and our bare bums
Demand that kilts be woven;
That Hielan trews and boots and shoes
Would be a help is proven.

To other things the mem'ry springs
That we may call essential,
Producing which by poor and rich
Are helps called Providential,
Which work, if stopped—as land uncropped—
Would ruin any nation.
Such must not strike: then all alike
By means of legislation.

Let human kind bear this in mind:
“We are our brothers’ keepers”;
They’re progress’ foes who lead to blows
And stay a nation’s reapers.
So, work away as if ’twere play,
Yet vote “amelioration”:
For any wrong t’wards weak or strong
Remedial legislation.

1919.



JANUARY TWENTY-FIRST

Lines to my daughter resident in London, England.
“Cracked things last longest” was her consoling
remark in her letter.

HURRAY! hurray! this was the day
Your Ma and Pa were mated
For good or ill their part to fill
In case the world’s depleted.

Well what’s the fact although we’re “cracked”
Like old but faithful teapot?
Old means were used and blood infused
And you should think a heap o’t.

Where wad you been had we yestreen
But changed our minds about it

And so instead of being wed
The wisdom o't had doubted?

Can you deny that our young fry
Have made the world much better?
Upon my word it seems absurd
To hint o't in a letter.
The world it should be very proud
That we were so prolific:
Our children a' upholding law
And damning the Bolshevik
Whose ways and means have spilt the beans
They ought to have been chewing.
And they're alike who go on strike
Instead of work pursuing.

Ev'n wives have struck and brought worse luck
Than what they thought would happen,
For hubby crab had hired a "scab" (!)
When his wife started scrappin'.
With what result? There's mair intult
Than any of them ettled,
(And each divorce the laws enforce),
Before that strike was settled.

And now I'm back right on the track
Where I began this letter.
Nae other wife whose start in life
Might be considered better,
Nor other man whose well laid plan
Was right up dux to set her,
Can ere compare, computing fair,
With me and mine this minute
For through this life as man and wife—
Blessing the prize, we win it.

INDUSTRY

ALL industry is for the glory of God
And to benefit all of His creatures:
Creation is His, and our earthly abode
Is a storehouse of cardinal features.

To work out His plan He depends upon man
And endowed him with gifts automatic:
His Chief Engineer had had workers so queer
As to kill Him for words most emphatic.

Those words of the Chief were so clear yet so brief
That they stay with the Christian for ever:
"Peace on earth and good-will," and "thou shalt not kill"
Are the wish and command of good Giver.

Industrial road is the way back to God
And each creature has talents for using:
The mite and the man should do all that he can
Nor his time nor his talents abusing.

All industry is for the glory of God
Whether routine or work called creative:
The end and the aim are to good men the same,—
Carry on with our God, correlative.

1920.

TO ———, AN INVITATION

OUR gentle shepherd gone to rest
May, for us all, be for the best:
Meanwhile the old rams of the flock
Must keep an eye upon the stock
And ev'ry Sunday in the fold
Keep wether e'e on young and old.
What! you object to wether e'e
As being owned by you or me?

Speak for yoursel then, watch the lambs:
I'll keep an e'e on a' their dams
And should a yowe break through the fence
I'll hae my dog for its defence.
Meanwhile, so that we can agree,
Come hame next Sunday noon wi' me.
Yours faithfully—auld R.B.T.

1920.



LINES

To Mr. David Duncan.

SAINT VALENTINE'S DAY

ON the braid o' my back
With a kind o' a hoast
I hae time for a crack
Or the time would be lost:
So I tak up my pen
And I think o' lang syne
When young women and men
Chose their year's valentine.

Sensations for ever
Are great driving forces.
Ev'n changes in weather
This maxim endorses.
And oh, the sensations
When springtime approaches!
All life claims relations
With loving encroaches.

And Saint Valentine's Day
Made wondrously useful
To delight, or dismay,
Or comic—abuseful,
Comes handy as ever

When we've nothing to say
But hooray! and hooray!
For Saint Valentine's Day.

Selah.

The pussy willows seen
A day or two ago
Show clearly what I mean
Despite the depth of snow:
And good Saint Valentine's O.K.
With Love alive to win "The Day."

1920.



TO PRESUMPTUOUS STRIKE LEADERS

Why such confusion in this world
Instead of discipline and work?
Is not humanity imper'l'd
Because our privilege we shirk?

Is man's chief end not understood?
Has man no aim or end in view?
From birth to death the words "Be Good"
Have been ignored by me and you.

The home, the playground, and the school
Should surely qualify for life,
And breathe out warning to the fool
Who preaches discontent and strife.

As routine worker I resent
The lie in being called "wage slave":
No slave am I but quite content
To make of work my play, you knave.

And who are you who call me "Scab,"
Who lift the load that you despise?
Your life-long aim seems one of grab:
You lead brute strength with shifty eyes.

And when you "call a strike," you *****
Your blows affect the innocent
And from slain innocent rebounds
The boomerang ignobly spent.

Misleaders! *****! Bolsheviks!
Your vision marred by selfishness:
With hate bloodthirstiness you mix
And proffer with quack wolfishness.

Go hide yourselves in silentness—
That of the tomb would suit you best,
And let creative work progress
Which gives employment to the rest.

Nor dare deny this gospel truth:
Each man is free to choose his work;
This glorious land is his forsooth
Should he the plow or spade not shirk.



PILGRIM'S SONG

TUNE: No. 719, "Thanksgiving" in New Hymnal.

WHEN you reach your dear one's grave
Something of its riches save,
Virgin soil or bit of sod
Consecrated by his blood,
Something where a flow'r may bloom,
Something from the hero's tomb:
He died for freedom, he died for freedom,
Leaven his homeland with sacred soil.

"Killed in action," glorious death,
 "Died of wounds," some records saith.
 Were they members of a church?
 Write their names outside the porch,
 Carve them deep on corner stone
 For the world to ponder on.
 They died for freedom, they died for freedom,
 Freedom peacefully to live, love, toil.

1920.

LINES

*To Mr. David Duncan, Winnipeg, Saint Patrick's Day,
 17th March, 1920*

HELLO! Daddy Duncan, and how are ye now?
 And how's the dear Mither sae tender and true?
 I'll tak it for granted that you hae na wanted,
 Though "high cost o' living" maks ev'ry ane blue.
 The fact o' the matter there's nae place much better:
 It seems that the fetter o' famine's no through,
 But is roun' Europe ticht'nin' as deadly as lichtnin'—
 Bar last Summer's fricht'nin' it's spared me and you.

John Frost's on his crutches and hirplin' awa:
 He hates the Spring ditches and croak o' the craw.
 He likes the cauld better an's gotten a letter
 Down frae the North Pole where they keep ice and snaw.
 We're no like the seasons—for permanent reasons—
 And daurna speak treasons the now here at a':
 This is no' the equator we thank the Creator
 And trust to meet later wi' nae ills ava.

N.B.—I'm singing this to you to tune: "*Come under my Plaidie.*"

A SQUIBFOREWORD, FORERUNNER, PREFACE OR
INTRODUCTION

It is meet you should know who is writing this Squib:
What experience of life (not sprung from whose rib).
Well from Parish school life he went straight to a mill:
Ten-hour day for ten years had of weaving his fill;
Leaving that to sell things that all weaving mills used
He spent ten years hard work and ne'er thought time abused.
Then in year eighteen-eighty got hurt (railway smash—
Engine driver or signalman must have been rash),
And in four years of struggle he failed to make good
Then made tracks for the West where he heard they grew
food.

From the year eighty-four, here in Manitoba,
With his feet on the farm and his back to the wa'
He had fought a good fight and has fighting stuff left,
Though he left the old homestead, of home not bereft.

I

The earth is and has been the wealth of the ages
With the creatures thereon built to search out their wages
In food, drink and shelter according to species
From microbe to man choosing instinctive messes.

And so far as is known this was nature's intention
But for man who has shewn a good-gift of invention
To lighten so far as the human's concerned
The labour involved in the wage to be earned.

But alas! and alack! for some lads and some lasses
Who would rather sell spades than use spades to raise
grasses,
Who forget the injunction: raise babies and beans
Keeping balance of pow'r aye in using the means.

For the "high cost of living" is end of the tethers
Of those who won't work on this earth in all weathers,
Taking all the advantage to lighten their labour
By trading results, tools and work with their neighbour.

II

It is said that the wage of all sin is still death
And the brute that won't work is deprived of his breath.
This would seem to be true just so far as I've seen
And wild beast that works least has grown terribly lean.

As for man, civilized, he invented a scheme
That has failed to come up to the height of his dream,
Just because he had failed in his rude estimate
Of the value of things he produced for the state.

"First of Arts," agriculture! these terms are quite right,
For they mean raising food to prevent famine plight,
And no so-called "Fine Art" can its praises maintain
'Gainst the loveliest picture—a fine field of grain.

Now add to our picture a house, sheep and cattle,
This human is well nigh equipped for life's battle:
Wool, leather, food, clothing for inside and out,
And "the farmer's well off" you will probably shout?

But hold on! let me say that the farmers have fought
Against natural ills with which this land was fraught,
Such as bear, wolf and fox, skunk, linx, mink and gopher,
The badger and weasel—are samples we offer.

Yet these were not all; with John Frost we'd to reckon,
Who followed Aurora Borealis' beckon
And ate up in a night with a crunch of his jaws,—
But, say, what could we do against natural laws?

And these natural ills had their human compeers
Who ill treated the farmers for one hundred years:
They combined to fix prices, ignoring the cost
Of stuff raised by the farmer, who thus always lost.

Add these to the national plan of protection:
You're nearing the root of boy farmer defection
Which the people can cure in a peaceable way
When by vote of said people, the farmers hold sway.

III

Philosophical farmers, "the salt of the earth,"
Take the visit of natural ills with some mirth.
For instance, one year, away back in the eighties
Crops near ready to cut, and flow'rs on the "praties,"
On the eve of our picnic a hail storm came on
And left nothing to harvest: all, all, all was gone!
Was our picnic a failure? No Sir. All agree
'Twas the best ever held in Rookhurst. Don't you see?

From the first to the last, that means thirty-five years
Since we started in farming (how long it appears!)
We've been pointing things out that were keeping us back
Just as surely as slowness of Hudson's Bay track.

Well the farmers thus ruined, the lenders step in
(And the writer of this looked on that as a sin,
For the loss as related above should be borne
By the nation at large, but it treats this with scorn)
So the farmer succumbs and is burdened for life
With a mortgage, a fam'ly, and heart-broken wife.
Then the young folk disgusted at things they think wrong
Make tracks for the city,—in their hearts this old song:

"Farewell to the stoops o' starvation
Forever and ever amen:
My chanter I'll blow through the nation
Before that I yoke them again.
To starve in the middle o' plenty
And toil till I'm likin' to fa'
To pamper a parcel o' gentry
It fits na' my stomach ava."

IV

But time came around and the grain growers rallied:
Grain growers' societies, by districts were allied;
Conventions were held, resolutions were carried;
Each member of Parliament thoroughly harried.
Long looked for ameliorative work started,
Perhaps in a way that was rather half-hearted:

But time for whole-hearted work surely draws nearer
When foes to class priv'lege are led by T. Crerar.
While we cannot rejoice that the Great War began
(Nay our sorrow and pride for our heroes out-ran
Ev'ry suggestion that this was our chance
To boost prices ourselves while our boys died in France)
Still we knew that responsible men were alert
To the danger of famine,—Lloyd George did assert
That the farmer was first in his thought when he said:
"We'll encourage the men whom we look to for bread."
So he offered to buy all the wheat we could raise
At a price that would cover the cost (to his praise),—
Which was just a beginning to bring better times
And a hint to law-makers that delays were crimes.

1920.



CONDITION OF TRADE IN THE WORLD

I

I think I'm qualified to speak
About world's trade condition
Whose fundament has sprung a leak
And points it to perdition.

"Man's inhumanity to man"—
The cause of this confusion—
Has spoilt the great Creator's plan
Of manhood's contribution.

II

I'm satisfied I've done my share
Necessities producing:
Ten years in pow'r loom mill and mair—
My talents I was using;
Ten years on top of that in trade—
Mill furnishing, brush making—
(Four years bad luck through broken head)
One year,—right here,—heart-breaking.

Add five and twenty years to that
On farm near Minnedosa,—
The young folk gone, I'm forced to squat
In town-house now to boss a'.

I never was ashamed of this:
My father was a poor man,
But rose to affluence through this:
My father was a sure man.

Selah.

III

Should industries built on successes in life
Be subject to end through internecine strife?

Can physical strength take the place of invention
Or rule out by force a Creator's intention?

Are Captains of industry in their right place
In watching that workers don't bring them disgrace?

Should organized Labour, because they are strong,
Have God on their side when they want to do wrong?

Selah.

IV

With the "gift of the gab" and "a bee in his bonnet"
A man can spread honey or hate on this planet;
Can smilingly tell of its beauty and worth
Or stingingly kindle a hell upon earth.

All such men have been busy since history started,—
The gentle and loving ones sometimes down-hearted
But patiently preaching amelioration
Of ev'ry conceivable ill in creation.

But the stingers—Oh dear! and confound their
ambition—

They must rule the earth or bring earth to perdition!
Oh yes! they are clever—and so is the devil—
At misleading me who, let be, would be civil.

Selah.

V

Too few escape the tragedies of life,
The accidents, preventable or not:
None are immune from errors in the strife
Of living, though the narrow way be sought.
The truth that all have sinned can not allay
Regrets that we ourselves have gone astray.
'Twere well then that all we should watch our steps
And see that we hurt not, or be ourselves
The victims of the world's inane inepts
For there, alas! are always senseless elves.

1920.

VALENTINE

Saint Valentine's Day, 1920.

DEAR wife, in thee I found a mate
Whose faithfulness defied ill fate
As when the tragedy befell
That turned our heav'n into a hell.
Ev'n then thy strength of love was shewn
Till all our foes were overthrown.
I owe my past and future bliss
To thy great love and righteousness.
Thy fruitfulness the world shall bless
For ages, good and nothing less,
As progeny thy virtues shew
As they and theirs bourgeon and grow
And proudly claim from thee and thine
Those virtues of my Valentine.

STRIFE

1919

COMMON sense is on vacation
O'er the hills and far awa';
In the lurch she's left each nation
To be led to break the law:
Leaders bent on revolution,
Spreading discontent and hate,
Undermining constitution
Drawn by good men up to date.

To mankind the world was deeded,
Ev'ry need to satisfy;
Possibly a gift conceded
Mankind's worthiness to try.
Progress made through man's invention
Since on earth the first man stood,
Surely points to some intention
Of reward for making good.

Evil has crept in among us:
Brush it speedily aside.
Hornets—not the bees—have stung us:
Work is still our play and pride.
Let each youth strive well to follow
A right choice of sphere in life:
But warn him not to stoop so low
As join any thoughtless strife.

OUR MINISTER

*Our Minister, God bless the man,—
Has preached and practiced ev'ry plan
To radiate an atmosphere
That says to man: "Lo I am here."

The folk around his eyes take in,
The righteous man and man of sin.
Disease and poverty and crime,
Relieving such consumes his time.
Nor cold, nor unconcerned is he
When mixing with humanity.

A soul relieved of ev'ry fear
Responds with smile and eye and ear,
And beckons on each one to come
To do some good like radium
Which is the soul of mother earth
And does some good at second birth.

This servant and true man of God
Spreads radiance along life's road
And spurning mercenary thought
That kindness has to be bought,
Relieves in Christ-like way some soul
To serve as endless ages roll.

1920.

*"Our Minister" was Rev. David Christie of Westminster Church, Winnipeg.

THE GLORY OF A COUNTRY

THERE is glory for a country
In its wealth within and out;
There is glory for its people
In its praises aye to shout:
Praising beauty of its mountains,
Of its rivers and its lakes;
Of its fertile plains, its fountains,
And the music that it makes.

But the glory of a country
Does not stop at how it looks,
Nor depends on outside features
Or internal attributes:
No! the glory of a country
Is the kind of men it breeds:
Are they free and honest people
Taking pride in noble deeds?

And the glory of a country
May be trumpeted abroad
When its peasantry and gentry
Shew their loyalty to God
In their laws and regulations
For the common good of all
And respect for other nations
Who on other gods may call.

Let the glory of our country
Be belief that God is good
And has clearly shewn His goodness
In providing us with food
And by giving Christ as teacher
And as life-long guide to goal
Through the glories of our country
And the striving of the soul.

POVERTY, DISEASE AND CRIME

WHILE poverty, disease and crime
Should be eliminated
We all must know it does need time
To cure things so ill fated.

There is a legislative way
By legalized compulsion,
But ignorant brute strength array
Can only cause convulsion.

May I convince my fellow men
That each of these three terrors
Is kept alive to kick again
Because of human errors?

The poor,—no poorer ever lived
Than I have been twice over.
Disease,—disease in me has thrived,
Each new one I discover.

And as for crime! 'twould take some time
And only raise your dander
Were I to prime this woefu' rhyme
By propagating slander.

Just grant that I am qualified
To chat about the matter,
Objections being mollified
If I resort to clatter.

Preserve your independence, yea,
No matter what you tackle.
Give heed to what you do and say:
Egg's valued more than cackle.

If you don't love the work you're at
Don't stay with it unhappy,
But use the brain beneath your hat,—
There's more for you dear chappie.

Congenial work prefer to wage,
Though that is not the fashion:
To grab the dollar's all the rage
And veritable passion.

And this it is without a doubt
That brings the world disaster:
More wages and less work they shout
And damn the one called master.

Though master's but the leading one,
Employer, or investor:
And so when all is said and done,
A poverty arrestor.

Then tho' you may not be a "Boss"
Producing something useful,
And independence suffers loss,
To him be not abuseful.

You get employment of a man
Who had initiative:
But afterwards his goodness ban
And you yourself the caitiff.

We've touched on poverty and crime.
A cause of both is "striking."
To simplify that truth in rhyme
May not be to your liking.

'Tis that desire for higher wage
And shorter hours of labour,
Which, on high cost of living gauge
Reads less food for your neighbour.

And now we touch on foul disease,
The foulest in all nations:
Just prostitution if you please
For sensual sensations.

As poverty, disease and crime
Are socially related,

Should each man kill one at a time
The ill would be abated.

So if a man's a man at all—
And this embraces woman—
Another strike he'd never call
Because it is inhuman.

Selah.

As by laws and regulations
Vile diseases have been fought,
Such as decimated nations
Ere the microbe had been caught,
So the other evil phases
Such as poverty and crime
Will be lessened,—sing the praises
Of good men who ask for time.

Legislation, fair taxation,
Education, things divine,—
After due consideration,—
Such, our best men do align
To combat the said three evils,
For the welfare of mankind:
Not by leading strikers' revels,
Mobs of blind men led by blind.

1920.

BUSINESS UPSIDE DOWN

THE world of business upside down
Is struggling to get righted,
But by infernal circus clown
All Christian effort's blighted.

Work, work, work, work the Captains say:
Work makes to ballast wanted
To keep her steady at the quay
And business men undaunted.

But by a universal streak
Of madness in the workers,
The mutineers have made a leak,
And other men are shirkers.

Before they start to right the ship
That means to them a living,
Misleaders yell out "let her rip
We now are orders giving:

And not the men who think and plan,
Invent, and offer wages.
We must be masters ev'ry man:
To hell with mental stages."

1920.



TED AND MADGE

TUNE: "*Happy We've Been a' Thegither.*"

MAGGIE was a Scotsman's dochter,
Teddy was old England's son,
Soldier, he, he long had sought her
And at last they were made one.
"On the strength" of Britain's army
Ted and Maggie bred wi' speed,
Teddy shielding Meg frae harm aye
Sure, improved the Scottish breed.

They first met in Manitoba
Over twenty years ago;
Now they're back to see the snow-ba'
And to give five bairns a show.
Here Great Britain's stock's progressing,
Plenty room to spread their wing:
Faults and virtues aye confessing,
Still they sing God save the King.

1920.

THE LADDER OF LIFE

No spurs of ambition
Nor eke education
Have I though I mount on my hobby
To ride bare back races
Through life's idle spaces
On Pegasus bred by one "Bobby":
Enjoy the sensation
Of high elevation,
See things quite unknown to the masses,
The world in its beauty
When each does his duty,
And cause and effect on the classes.

From lowest to highest
This rider espiest
Their treatment of earth and each other.
The world full of blessings
Responds to caressings,
Supporting each sister and brother:
But lo! on my honour,
I now look upon her
And see men unjust in this matter,—
Such high cost of living!
While world has been giving
According to numbers that pat her.

All wealth like all water
Should constantly scatter,
Flow downward and poverty throttle,
And not be arrested,
Be tried and be tested,
Then sealed in non-producers' bottle.
Where poverty pinches
Through hoarding of riches,
Food, clothing or money no matter,
Laws ought to be better,
Enforced to the letter,—
No worker with half empty platter.

Go back to the land, Sirs,
And see how she answers
With all that humanity wishes:
You need not despair, Sir,
All riches are there, Sir,
Produce, and prepare your own dishes.
This striking for wages
Good conscience enrages:
More money is not what you're needing;
Food, clothing and houses,
As wisdom supposes;—
The earth will respond to good breeding.

Rich "Masters" "protected"
Poor "Workers" neglected,
The bottom and top of same ladder:
On this ladder of life
There should be no such strife!
Share up then and make the world gladder.
Old Peg I bestraddle,
No bridle or saddle,
And go wheresoever he takes me,
And I see, if you please,
All between two great seas
That Providence never forsakes me.

1920



HIGH COST OF LIVING

WHAT does high cost of living mean
With reference to finances?
The trades think things are all serene
Because their wage advances:
Whereas, in truth the more each gets—
Till stock of coin's exhausted—
Will, by and by, nathless regrets
All healthy trade see blasted.

The thrifty for a thousand years
Have banked their little savings
Which bankers lend to pioneers
At interest—mere shavings?
But pioneers though brainy men
Need help from brawn and muscle
And so, these surely gain again
By joining in life's bustle.

But there's a limit to such loans
And that's when banks are broken.
Productiveness alone atones
If gold's to be wealth's token:
So trade is lost by labour's pranks—
Less work yet greater wages—
And might, brute strength, may break the banks
But Providence outrages.

What is the cure for "H.C.L."?
There's only one that's certain:
To turn industry back from hell
And on strikes drop the curtain.
In other words produce more food,
More clothing and more houses:
Make these three plentiful and good
And lo! in peace man browses.

A re-adjustment on these lines
Would mean no backward movement
But rather would shew outward signs
Of rational improvement.
The "first of arts" would be revived—
We know that's agriculture—
The second, weaving, has survived;
House building needs no sculpture.

Returning to these trades in force
Sufficient as to numbers
Would be required of men, of course,
So rouse ye from your slumbers!

Give up less necessary work
All ye who are unselfish,
And save a world from ills that lurk
In oratory elfish.

1920.

LODGE LECTURES

TRUTH is said to be stranger than fiction
And when proved is beyond contradiction:
So as truth lives for ever
From old fiction we sever
For its trial but leads to conviction?

Thus if heaven and hell are a fable
To reach either of them we're unable
So give heav'n a new meaning,
Say 'tis happiness gleaning,
And that hell is just life made unstable.

Can a laddie in love aye be truthful?
Or is fiction allowed when he's youthful?
Need a bonnie wee lassie
Be aye jealous and saucy
When she sees lady friends get a mouthful?

Oh say, how about imagination?
Can that possibly have a relation?
Is not that inspiration
Which just progs on a nation
To think, act, and thus cause a sensation?

Dear reader I bid you farewell now,
I believe in both heaven and hell now,
For a very good reason:
Not believing is treason
To the kingdoms within us that dwell now.

1920.

OLD TIMERS' PICNIC*Kildonan Park, 14th July, 1920.*

HAVING paid my respects to our gentle "old timers"
Oh I am delighted beyond all belief,
And just hasten to say: 'tis the duty of rhymers
To praise and applaud them no matter how brief:
And for reasons annexed to our very existence
Surrounded by comforts of life as we are,—
They've followed the footsteps of fathers with persistence
And built for true freedom, peace,—stronger than war.

**A JOLLY TIME**

WE'VE had a jolly time today,
And mean to have some others,
For Life is short: we'll work and play
As sisters should and brothers;
And all our lives as men and wives
We'll hold to this our motto,—
"Our God is Love" and love survives,
All other creeds may go to?

All children should co-operate,
Whom creeds once kept asunder;
And men must learn ere 'tis too late
Not to repeat their blunder.
We would be free to climb the tree
Of knowledge good and evil
That so all we know when we see
Our enemy the "devil."

Let all wee boys and girls rejoice,
Of ev'ry tongue and nation,
And raise a noise with heart and voice
That penetrates creation,—
To let all know we'll overthrow
Each threatened separation.
Let churchmen go with peepy show:
True brotherhood's salvation.

One universal school for bairns
Where they'll be trained in thinking,
While some of nature's laws each learns
That older folk keep blinking:
For instance that all things belong
To what is named "Creation,"
And folk united are made strong
To keep things in relation.

With all humility I say,
With due respect to others,
That industry and love will pay;
Not brothers crushing brothers:
For warring since this world began
Has made bad men of races.
Ev'n though each lived allotted span,
For all, earth has her places.

1920.



THE GOOSE THAT LAYS—

WHERE is the goose that lays the golden egg?
Try North and South and East, then Winnipeg!
And note her spreading wings and brooding ways
Then ask yourself: Where is the goose that pays?

White in the winter, green in the summer she,
At all times rich in promises for thee:
Plucked, picked or cooked she quickly shall repay
Investments of whatever kind you may.

If famous, we will banquet ye and sing,
If yet unknown to fame, you'll have your fling.
Brawn, brain, or cash, come quickly with them all,
A hundred years of age, no virtues pall.
For she is young and strong on wing or leg:
All kinds of motive power in Winnipeg.

11th March, 1913.



THE WINNIPEG FALCONS

HURRAH for the Falcons, the Winnipeg Falcons,
True birds of a feather can any deny?
Through fair and foul weather they all fly together
And pick up the prizes wherever they try.

All comers defeated, the champions returning
Are hailed by Canadians with perfect delight
And learn for themselves that home fires have been burning
From time they flew off till returned from the flight.

We'll welcome the day when the nations determine
To lay aside war with its ignoble aims;
A true League of Nations, with no human vermin:
Men, women and children made kin by field games.

Hurrah for the Falcons, the Winnipeg Falcons,
True birds of a feather can any deny?
Through fair and foul weather they all fly together
And pick up the prizes wherever they try.

1920.

MANITOBA

BLITHE and fearless voyageur
Bathing in life's elixir,
Faring forth to find Red men,
Nature's freest citizen,
Wise in land and river lore,
Happy hunters, men of war,
Face to face white men and red,
Smoke, and jealousy has fled.
Voyageurs have shewn their goods,
Trading them for wealth of woods,
Fur from ev'ry kind of beast,
After which the parting feast.

Monarchs ruled parts of the world,
Symbols theirs, their flags unfurled;
No man's land refused by France,
British Prince made the advance;
Traders sent to Hudson's Bay,
Duly chartered there to stay.
Traders too of Montreal
Sent their voyageurs each Fall;
Into Rupert's Land they came,
Rivals in fur trading game;
Little recking change in view
As Lord Selkirk travelled through.

Agriculture, first of Arts—
Human aid for nature's parts—
Introduced to prairie lands
By Lord Selkirk's loving hands,
Inhospitably (with blows)
Was received by culture's foes,
But the gentle art prevailed
And brute strength once more had failed:
British law and legal right
Overcame fur traders' might.
Art and nature, truly wed,
Manitoba Province bred.

A.D. Eighteen sev'nty came,
Saw unrest and cause to blame.
Came some troops from East to West,
Saving settlers then opprest
By the natives led by Riel,
Destroyer of Scotsman leal;
Put rebellious ones to flight,
Rescued Province from its plight.
Federation, hard and fast,
Canada complete at last,
Fighting evils all the time,—
Poverty, disease, and crime.

Boundaries—not fortified—
Neighbour-like were soon applied,
Open eyes and ears and mouth,
East and West and North and South;
Freedom of exchange in trade;
Roads and railroads quickly made;
East and West from sea to sea
Trains go whistling merrily.
Canada, new nation born,
Met "The Day" and hails the morn,
When, at peace with all the world,
Her new flag will be unfurled.

Education strong yet mild,
Educating ev'ry child
In the language of the land
So that all may understand:
None born here count alien,
Little maids and little men
Living as Canadians should,—
Plenty fun and plenty food.
Child-life glorious is here:
No where else are children freer.
Ours the present, holding sway:
Theirs the future better day.

Golden weddings surely are
Symbols of reproof to war,
Couples with their progeny
Giving thanks for wedding day.
Thus old timers, still alive,
With peace problems nobly strive,
And instil in rising race,
Love of peace—without disgrace,
Nor at threats of kaisers, squat,
Bowing to an autocrat,
But with freedom of the soul,
Progress loving, onward roll.

Fifty years of wedded life,
Provinces abandon strife;
But united, called to war,
As a nation ventured far:
For world freedom dealt a blow
At most cruel cultured foe;
Proving, by selfsacrifice,
Righteousness can only rise.
Reconstruction after war
Must proceed as heretofore:
Therefore, let us, ev'ry man
Do duty as best he can,
Working for each other's good,
Fostering true brotherhood.
Only thus can world be healed,
And life's purpose be revealed.

1920.

AUTOMOBILITIS*By***"PEDESTRIAN."**

WINNIPEGGERS mend your ways:
Quit this automobile craze.
Go to work upon your feet:
Motors do not own the street.
Mothers do and will arise
If child life you will despise,
And much better men than you
Will your selfishness undo.
For, by heav'n! we mean to shoot
Ev'ry baby-killing brute.
This for ages men have done,
So look out for number one.

Winnipeg was never planned
For wild elephantine band
Ridden by some crazyites
Riding over peoples' rights:
But for humans, young and old,
With eyes front, nor freedom sold,
Without fear to wend their way
Where they choose, by night or day.
These, of course, have right of way,—
Doctor's rig and merchant's dray,
Water butts to fight with fire,—
Nothing there to raise our ire.

Fines and forfeits do not cure
Automobilitis sure;
But are just solatium
To offended dignitum;
Nor does "finding," "accident,"
Any so-called thing prevent.
Save a life and don't dispute:
Value ev'ry one on foot.

No one has a better right
To be safe from death or fright.
Automobiles never fill
Shoes of any one they kill.
Nor good reason give for rush:
"Accident" pronounce, then hush.

Automobiles come to stay?
Sure! but keep them out the way,
Off our city's crowded streets:
No room there for such land fleets.
Cowardly our rulers are
Who would dare to use a car,
And forsooth the priv'lege give
To a car to kill and live.
This when cows and pigs are barred
So Peg's beauty be not marred:
Yet "Tin Lizzies" licensed are—
They more murderous by far.

Winnipeggers, have a heart!
From a misconception part.
Time is money has been said:
Take it then. Be not afraid.
Take it to what e'er you do:
Do not rush it quickly through.
Slow but sure will win the fight:
Hurried work is not done right.
Automobilitis fear:
For untimely death is near.
Taking your time to all things
Longer life and riches brings.

Each of automobilists
On his carefulness insists:
Therefore we impugn them all
When we see their victims fall.
Automobiles have a place,
But it must be where there's space,

And no right of way at all
Notwithstanding honking call—
Which is just impertinence
And insult, a vile offence,
Evil as a pistol shot
From assassin: is it not?

Automobile honk, honk, honk,
To my nostril is a skunk:
To my progress bids me halt;
On my time bids me default;
Claims a privilege from me
Where I have the right to be—
On my way on my concern
While they're yet away astern
Where they easily can slow
Till they have a right to go,
Which is, when the way is clear
And no one on foot too near.

Such like inconsistencies
Beat the devil's pretences:
Eight hours work to make the "dough"
But ride "Lizzies" to and fro!
Hunting the pedestrian
'Stead of walking like good men;
"Parking" in our thoroughfare,
Trapping people unaware:
"Winsome Winnipeg" no more,
Simply automobile store!
Thus, old pride in safest streets
Inhumanity defeats.

Watch in Portage Avenue
How the automobiles do.
Independent, there they go,
Ev'ry speed 'tween fast and slow,
Not a steady, safety gait—
Indian file or meet your fate—

But the rule,—go as you please,
Claimed, like freedom of the seas.
Watch pedestrian try to cross:
“Heads” he’ll do it: “tails,” your loss!
Honk! he’s confused: honk! he’ll fall!
Honk! Has he no right at all?

1920.



LINES (Last)

To Mr. David Duncan, 1920.

COULD I but hire an aeroplane
To cross the sea and back again
Now wad ye risk the stormy main
To see the fields o’ Flanders?
Or are ye quite content to bide
At hame beside your faithfu’ bride
And for a wee still tak some pride
In church and state philanders?

Weel, weel, whatever way ye say,
Wi’ happy hame and nought to pay
We’ll bide a wee and watch and pray
That time may keep us singing,
And when from earth we get release
Auld Pete may recognize our fleece
And ope the gate where troubles cease
And sheep bells a’ keep ringing.

1920.

LINES

To my sister Janet.

LIKE the shortest dream of night
Memory goes whirling past!
True as steel to what is right
Good old Jen, from first to last.

There she was in Pollokshaws,
Palmy (!) days there at the school!
She and I gained scant applause
From ignoble teacher's rule.

Love of learning taught by force
Failed with us and many more,
And we turned to work of course,—
Love and work make heav'n's front door.

She and I had found our mates,
Progeny, and happiness:
Separated by the fates,
Victims of fate's scrappiness.

Love, the only pow'r worth while,
Sometimes seems quite overthrown,
But Love pops up with a smile,
Would-be conquerors unknown.

"Grannie Gowan," "Puddin' Sam,"
Other tender names in mind—
Here I vow—"just as I am"—
Providence and Jen were kind.

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

"History repeats itself,"
This is true of history:
Happiness destroyed for pelf,
Selfishness no mystery.

This world in a seething mass,
Covetousness general!
Providence may judgment pass:
'Tis the world's own funeral.

But if there be two or three
In each small community
Who, like Him of Galilee,
Hath from hate immunity,

These, with love, may overcome
Spirits of unrest and strife,
And, from what is called hum-drum,
Raise in all the joys of life:

Joys that follow love of work,
Love of so-called enemies,
Love by means of which the stork
Introduceth remedies.

JOY RESTORERS

ON a world beyond all praise
Peacefully men fail to live:
Fail to smooth each other's ways
Universal joy to give.
We who now at school are training,
Training to restore joys waning,
We resolve ere leaving school
To retain our friendliness:
Take our place this world to rule:
Live and strive for happiness.

We young folk are not to blame
For our elders' muddledum:
But we ask them to think shame
And on views of theirs keep mum.
We, the rising generation,
Shall redeem Canadian nation
By the simple, simple rule
Of obedience to our laws,
Quite ignoring ev'ry fool
Who would dare betray our cause.

1920.

**JESUS**

JESUS as a highlander,
Climbed the hills of Nazareth,
Tended carefully by Her
Who had given Him His breath.

From the vantage ground of birth,
With the humble carpenter,
He, the King of all the earth,
Labourer with him and Her,

Demonstrated attributes—
 Father's, Son's and Holy Ghost's—
Human—differing from brutes—
 Recognized by heav'nly hosts,

Recognized by common men
 As He shewed creative pow'rs,
Crowning the commandments ten
 With the one that should be ours.

In His day He saw and heard
 Merchantmen of ev'ry clime:
And ere yet He had a beard
 To the bearded spake sublime.

Militarists too He saw,
 Felt the blows of those in pow'r,
Humbly subject to each law,
 Loyal to His latest hour.

Yet rejected by His own
 Just because He was so good:
His good works were overthrown,
 His intent misunderstood.

Greek and Hebrew eloquence
 Aye contending for their gods
Like their goods of great expense,
 Met and mixed on these cross roads.

There, right there, on holy ground
 Jesus Christ, the son of God,
By contentious ones then found,
 Did His merchandise unload,

Merchandise more precious far
 Than the caravans which passed,
Merchandise for peace, not war,
 Which for aye would spread and last,

Merchandise, and free to all,—
Knowledge as to who He is:
It is He on whom we call,
He is God and we are His:
He as Love personified
Lived for us and for us died.

1920.

OUR SHANTY LIFE

In the days long ago in our wee shanty home,
We had patience and faith that a good time would come:
And our faith never faltered, our hope never failed,
And our Love warmer grew, and our pray'rs have prevailed.

1920.

A CHRISTMAS CARD

SANTA Claus—without the beard—
Stops repeating "'am the laird"
Just because it's Christmas time
And forgiving's more sublime;

And, forby, in Winnipeg
Grumblin' tenants had nae leg
Ev'n to staun on, so the judge
Just pronounced complaints a' fudge.

So, like fudge the verdict's taen
And we all intone Amen:
While the sweets of Christmastide
Are received or sent with pride,

Ev'n in shape of Christmas Card
Like this one from humble bard
Who, with confidence, not fear,
Wishes you a Guid New Year,
And, though even "no sae fou"
Ye'll hae Merry Christmas too.
For no one had seen our God
Till He came to take our load
And presented attributes
In whose Light Hun gods were brutes.
Therefore let us happy be
And enjoy our Christmas tree—
Emblem of His Providence,
Love and life. With confidence
We urge nations to obey
Christ, our God, and peaceful stay.

1920.



CHRISTMAS CARD

1920

At Christmas we rejoice because
Peace and Goodwill—and Santa Claus—
Persist, and make us truly pray
That friends can sing "Oh happy day."

Likewise as New Year's day appears
That they will banish all their fears,
And in pursuit of happiness,
Enjoy the things that truly bless.

These by my hand for Auld Lang Syne
My kindly thoughts for thee and thine.

LINES

*To Mr. and Mrs. George Fisher, acknowledging receipt
of Begonia plant, Christmas 1920*

BEGONIA, Begonia,
No threat'ning thorns on you:
Thy glist'ning leaves lov'd dew receives
To freshen flow'rets' hue.
Such loving pow'rs as Christmas flow'rs
Revive us through and through:
Flow'rs, leaves, and stems, strength giving gems
To friendships tried and true.

**LINES**

*To Mr. and Mrs. Jarratt on birthday of their son Peter,
5th January, 1921.*

PETER Jarratt, three years old,
Valued at his weight in gold
Simply as an entertainer,
By his parents, and his trainer,
Uncle Charlie—surnamed Kemp—
Who—opposed to raising hemp—
Raises Cain for who oppose
Little Peter Jarratt's prose
As he telephones his friends:
"Come! my birthday all depends
Whether it be dull or jolly
For my Daddy, Rolly Polly,
And my Mamma, Daddy's May,
While wee Peter's making hay
In the sunshine of birthday.
Come and join in Peter's play."

1921.

THE INVITATION:

Minnedosa, Man.,
12th February, 1921.

Mr. R. B. Thomson,
Winnipeg.

Dear Old Timer:—

I have been requested by the Old Timers' executive to send you a complimentary ticket for the Banquet, also to ask you kindly to compose something for the occasion. We hope that you will be there in person.

We are all well, trusting you are all the same.
An early reply will be very much appreciated.

I remain,
Old Timer,
ELIAS JONES.

THE RESPONSE:

*A Rookhurstian Tribute to Mr. David Cannon, Editor of
Minnedosa Tribune, written in response to an invitation
to a banquet in Mr. Cannon's honour to which
I really could not go.*

To give honor to whom it is due
We are here from the ends of the earth
And we're proud to see some of the crew
That had launched the Tribune from its berth.

We had something to eat and to drink
But had nothing to nourish the mind
So the Tribune at last made us think
And gave leading and light to the blind.

To the Tribune D. Cannon was wed
And a wonderful problem was solved:
From the time that those two went to bed,
Well a mental awak'ning evolved.

Then the whig and the tory had scraps,
With results, that some things were made clear:
All our wits being sharpened, perhaps,
Sent us all to the polls without fear.

But behold something greater than that,
The community spirit was born
And it flourished right under our hat,
For each district could blow its own horn.

Editorials taking the lead,
Then hurrah for the news of the day,
But the titbits we swallowed with greed
Were just what we ourselves had to say.

And the kindly old man now our guest
Gave his life as it were for our good,
For his spirit, it must be confessed,
As inscribed—was imbibed with our food.

Having left his impress on us all—
As a great personality doth—
We respond to Cannon-i-cal call
Though we must drink his health wi' Scotch broth.

(As to that he'll have something to say,
For I've sat at his elbow ere this.
And he's welcome my choice to betray,
For I drank neither whisky nor fiz.)

ENCORE?

METHINKS I hear a faint encore;
Or can it be old timer's snore?
Or good friend Cannon's angry roar

At "such like stuff"?
I vow that I'll bum-Bard him more
Should he be rough.

For I aver without a fear
That singing is more potent here
To save a world from woe and tear
Than sounds of war:
For war is wisdom out of gear,
Unclean as tar.

So let us sing our peaceful lays
And cultivate those peaceful ways
Which clarify without arrays
Of jingling swords.
D. Cannon let us loudly praise
With kindly words.

"In the beginning was the word,"
Since when man used it like a bird,
And singing, though sometimes absurd
In comic vein,
In Tribune used by Rookhurst Bard
In David's reign.

1921.



TO "UNKNOWN HEROES"

To unknown heroes' honour and glory
Tributes of song and monuments raise:
Though they be nameless, famous their story;
Their deeds of daring above all praise.

From wheresoever freedom was treasured
Came those unknown ones faithful and strong.
'Gainst the aggressor great hearts they measured:
Joined killed-in-action's immortal throng.

On hallowed graves their deeds consecrated,
Lay floral wreaths as oft as you may:
Glorified souls shall be decorated
When they arise at last reveille.

1921.



A TOAST

HERE's to our bold progenitor!
The Father of my Grannie:
He helped to win the world's Great War,
Descendants were so many.

From Australasia they came
And other great Dominions,
And, dying, earned undying fame—
Nathless some folks' opinions,

Because forsooth he used the gift,
The gift of reproducing.
But pshaw! traducers downward drift
While his creations using.

1921.



LINES

*To John Fisher, written on the day of John's wedding to
June, his wife, 20th August, 1921.*

OF a' your friens or far or near
I may be queerest o' the queer,
Thanks to Pollokshaws, man.
For there's a law o'er a' the earth:
Traditions o' folks' place o' birth
Persist—though fu' o' flaws, man.

Of a' your friens or far or near
I may be queerest o' the queer
But you hae been much queerer:
A braw June wedding you have had
In August! Claw your head like mad:
Your wife I dinna fear her.

Of a' your friens or far or near
I may be queerest o' the queer
But my! I'm your well-wisher,
And with your June I wish you joy
While you your wedded life employ
To spread the name of Fisher.

Of a' your friens or far or near
I may be queerest o' the queer
In off'ring this advice, man:
In righteousness be warm as love;
Yet cool and cautious Scotchman prove;
Like June be always nice, man.

1921.



LETTER

*To Mr. and Mrs. James Hunter, not forgetting Hamish,
their son, Christmas, 1921.*

LIKE flying fish kind Christmas wish when seen must be
believed
Though flying hours reduce our powers—in that we're not
deceived:
We're marking time to merry rhyme while wishing you are
happy
Nathless some pains that in your veins are crying for the
drappy? !

Christmas began when God-in-man had made His first ..
 appearance
That we might see Him e'e to e'e through faith and
 perseverance:
And so 'tis thus—at least with us—that we should all be
 merry
On His birthday who holdeth sway till we go cross the ferry.

The flight of time is most sublime in bringing this reminder
That henceforth we should brithers be and aye be growing
 kinder
Wi' peace and mirth o'er a' the earth: yea ev'n in puir auld
 Erin
Where best o' spuds cooked in their duds are fine wi' caller
 herrin'.

May ye hae mair wi' this guid fare, as Hunters you could
 catch it,
A rabbit good frae out the wood, or chicken—did you hatch
 it?
But hae a rest: be it confessed there's better than such
 dishes,
For intance this: a state of bliss arising from Good Wishes.

Your auld frien,
R. B. THOMSON.



FLIGHT

We'd stay much longer in our prime
 But for the flight of molar's;
We deprecate the flight of time,
 Likewise the flight of dollars:
Our faculty to write in rhyme
 (To great delight of scholars
Who mostly think the gift a crime)
 Takes flight as if on rollers.

THE SOUL

THE soul is ignored in this beautiful world
And that is the reason the world's imper'l'd.
For the soul, unlike the blood, can never be killed,
And should therefore rule all and blood never be spilled.
For why? Because souls are the harvest of God:
While blood of all creatures returns to the sod,
Though if left to mature in a natural way,
Many souls would be raised in these houses of clay.



HER PINK TEA

I've only slypet in to see
Our Mither at her ain pink tea.
By "pink" I mean pink o' perfection
Because it is a Scotch selection.
Forbye this reason there are ithers,
For here we hae the pink o' Mithers.



MY WORD

YE needna tak me at my word
Unless ye think I'm richt:
I've aften said things quite absurd
Until I gat mair licht.

LINES

*To Mr. and Mrs. George Fisher, Christmas, 1921,
acknowledging receipt of gift of a tray brought
from them by their niece, Miss Nettie
Love, to Mr. and Mrs. Thomson.*

ADDRESS TO A TRAY

FORERUNNER of A Guid New Year,
Love brought, and love hath sent you here
To represent on Christmas Day
Love, love on earth, not far away.
As salver, waiter, or as tray,
You'll serve us here without a pay
But that which is called gratitude
For holding well assorted food.
Of glass and wicker work you're made
By Veteran who lost his trade
But who, just at his country's call,
Offered his life to save us all.
Such service may you emulate
And save us from starvation's fate.

The above lines were the last written by Mr. Thomson. In February following Mr. George Fisher died, and a week later, 22nd February, 1922, Mr. Thomson died. They were buried in adjoining plots in Old Kildonan Cemetery, near Winnipeg, Manitoba.

GLOSSARY

- A', all.
 Aboon, above.
 Ae, one.
 Aething, one thing.
 A-faulding, a-folding.
 Aften, often.
 Aff, off.
 Ain, own.
 Aiblins, perhaps.
 Airn, iron.
 Airt, direction; point of earth or sky.
 Airts, directions.
 Ajee, to the one side.
 Alang, along.
 'Am, I am.
 Amang, among.
 Amaln, amen heartily across the main.
 An', and.
 An's, and is; and has.
 Ance, once.
 Ane, one.
 Anes, ones.
 Anither, another.
 Appalls, terror, dismay.
 Athol brose, whiskey.
 Auld, old.
 Auld Pete, St. Peter.
 Aulder, older.
 Ava, at all.
 Awa, away.
 Awee, a little while.
 Awfu', awful.
 Aye, always.
 Aye, yes.
 Ayont, beyond.
 Ba', ball.
 Babbed, pulled.
 Bachles, old boots.
 Back-haudin' holding back.
 Bairnie, little child.
 Bairnies, little children.
 Bairns, children.
 Bairny, little child.
 Baith, both.
 Bakit, baked.
 Bally, a mild oath.
 Ban', band.
 Bang, beat.
 Bannocks, scones.
 Bashfu' bashful.
 Batching, living life of batchelor.
 Baun, band.
 Bawbees, money.
 Bee, gathering of farmers to help one of them.
 Begnet, bayonet.
 Behaudin', to appear in need; indebted; obliged.
 Behin', behind.
 Ben, the inner or best room of a cottage.
 Beyon', beyond.
 Biddy, hen.
 Bide, wait, stay.
 Bien, well-to-do, comfortable.
 Birl, clatter.
 Birlin', clattering.
 Birlin' roun', whirling around.
 Birth-nicht, birth-night.
 Blaw, blow.
 Blether, nonsense; talk nonsense.
 Blethers, nonsense.
 Blin', blind.
 Blindfolden, blindfold.
 Blink, a look.
 Bluid, blood.
 Bogan, (Gael.) bog.
 Boggles, hobgoblins.
 Bonnie, beautiful.
 Bonnier, more beautiful.
 Bools, marbles.
 Boss a', master all.

- Brae, slope of hill.
 Braid, broad.
 Braw, handsome; gaily dressed.
 Braws, clothes; gay clothing.
 Bread, bread (pronounced breed).
 Breeks, breeches; pants; trousers.
 Brig, bridge.
 Brither, brother.
 Brithers, brothers.
 Brose, broth, thin oatmeal.
 Brose, Athol, whiskey, or whiskey and oatmeal.
 Bubbly-jock, male turkey.
 Bum, bottom.
 Bum, hum.
 Bumbees, bumble-bees.
 Bummin', humming.
 Bunny, rabbit.
 Burlin', whistling.
 Burn, stream.
 Burnie, streamlet.
 But an' ben, kitchen and parlor.
 Byke, a bee-hive.
 Ca', call.
 Ca'd, called; named; drove; driven.
 Cadger, carrier, travelling salesman.
 Callan, boy.
 Cam, came.
 Cank'rin', cankering.
 Canna, cannot.
 Cannie, careful.
 Cantle, cheerful; lively.
 Carena, care not.
 Ca's, calls.
 Cauld, cold.
 Caw, what the crow says.
 Chaff, banter; ridicule.
 Chaffin' bantering.
 Chanter, part of a bagpipe.
 Chaut, sad.
 Cheek, have a,—be ungrateful; impudent.
 Cheeping, chirping.
 Cheerfu', cheerful.
 Chiels, young fellows.
 Chreesht, oiled, smoothed.
 Chorin', doing work at home.
 Clachan, a hamlet.
 Claes, clothes.
 Claise, clothes.
 Claith, cloth.
 Claw, scratch; knock; hit.
 Cleed, clothe.
 Cloots, feet.
 Cockit, cocked.
 Coof, fool.
 Cooler, prison; jail.
 Coos, cows.
 Couldna, could not.
 Cowp't, tumbled over.
 Craw, crow.
 Creesht, oiled; smoothed.
 Croons, crowns; hums.
 Crouse, brisk and comfortable or bold.
 Crowns, heads.
 C.'s, Miss,—Miss Canada's.
 Cuddle, fondle.
 Custock, the heart of a stalk of cabbage.
 Cutty, short.
 Dachshund, German hound.
 Dad, father.
 Dae, do.
 Daffin', merry; merriment.
 Daft, foolish; sportive.
 Daftness, foolishness.
 Dander, anger, vexation.
 Dargai-like, like the charge of the Highlanders at Dargai.
 Darn, damn.
 Dash't, dash it.
 Daud, to knock.
 Daudin', knocking, pelting.
 Daunnerin', wandering slowly.
 Daur, dare.
 Daurna, dare not.
 Dead beat, bankrupt; hard up.
 Deave, deafen.
 Deavin', deafening.
 Dee, die.
 Deevil, devil.
 Deid, dead.
 Deil, devil.

- Deoch-an-doris, *parting cup*.
 Dethorn, *take thorns from*.
 Didna, *did not*.
 Dicht, *dight; wipe*.
 Dight, *wipe*.
 Dignitum, *dignity*.
 Ding, *to surpass; to beat*.
 Dish'd, *robbed, cheated*.
 Tochter, *daughter*.
 Dod, *a mild oath*.
 Doesna, *does not*.
 Dool, *sorrow; sad*.
 Doric, *dialect*.
 Doup, *bottom*.
 Dragon, *kite*.
 Drap, *drop; small quantity*.
 Drapping, *dropping*.
 Dree, *to endure; to imagine*.
 Dribble, *drop*.
 Drone, *bagpipe*.
 Drones, *bagpipes*.
- Ee, *eye; to watch*.
 Een, *eyen; eyes*.
 Eerie, *dismal; having or producing a superstitious feeling of dread*.
 Eke, *also*.
 Eldritch, *elvish; strange; wild. hideous*.
 'Em, *them*.
 En', *end*.
 Enchoric, *rural; domestic*.
 Eneugh, *enough*.
 Ettle, *design*.
 Ettled, *designed; foresaw*.
 Eureka, *a discovery*.
- Fa', *fall*.
 Fa'en, *fallen*.
 Falthier, *father*.
 Faithfu', *faithful*.
 Falcons, *Winnipeg.—the hockey team that toured Europe*.
 Falderals, *pretty things*.
 Fa'n or fa'en, *have fallen*.
 Fash, *trouble myself*.
 Fashed, *troubled*.
 Fauld, *a fold*.
- Faulded, *embraced*.
 Faulding, *folding*.
 Fause, *false*.
 Faut, *fault*.
 Fearfu', *fearful*.
 Fear't, *afraid*.
 Fecht, *fight*.
 Feckless, *powerless; without effect*.
 Feed'n, *feed in*.
 Feg, *a fig*.
 Fegs, *surely; a mild oath*.
 Fellah, *peasant; fellow*.
 Fen', *fend; live comfortably*.
 Fend, *to keep off; live comfortably*.
 Fending, *faring*.
 Fidgin-fain, *fidgetting with eagerness*.
 Fien's, *fiends*.
 Flent, *fiend*.
 Fient a, *the devil a*.
 Fin', *find*.
 Fire-en', *fireside*.
 Fish'd, *deceived*.
 Fit, *foot*.
 Flicht, *flight*.
 Forby, *besides*.
 Forbye, *besides*.
 For't, *for it*.
 Fou, *full; tipsy*.
 Frae, *from*.
 Fricht'nin', *frightening*.
 Frichtit, *frightened*.
 Frichtsme, *frightsme*.
 Frien', *friend*.
 Frienly, *friendly*.
 Fry, *swarm or crowd of children*.
 Fu', *full*.
 Fudge, *nonsense, a mild oath*.
 Futies, *lazy, thoughtless fellows*.
 Fyle, *to soil or dirty*.
- Gae, *go*.
 Gaed, *went*.
 Galoot, *a simpleton, an oddity*.
 Gane, *gone*.
 Gang, *to go*.

- Gar, to make.
 Gaun, going.
 Gee, go to the right; to the right.
 Gee whiz, a mild oath.
 Gets, goes off.
 Gie, give.
 Gied, gave.
 Gie't, give it.
 Gin, if.
 Gipsy, the,—Gipsy Smith, the evangelist.
 Girn, to snarl; to grin.
 Girmed, snarled.
 Glengaries, Scotch bonnets.
 Glesca, Glasgow.
 Gran', grand.
 Grannie, grandmother.
 "Grannie Gowan," nickname given to the author by his sister.
 Grat, wept.
 Gree, agree.
 Greet, weep.
 Greetin', weeping.
 Grozet, a gooseberry.
 Grub, food.
 Grumphie, the sow.
 Grumphy, pig.
 Grun', ground.
 Guddled, waded and fished.
 Gude, the Supreme Being; good.
 Guild, good.
 Guidwife, good wife.
 Gumption, understanding.
 Gurns, traps.
 Gye, very.
 Hae, have.
 Haena, have not.
 Haein', having.
 Hale, whole; entire.
 Hame, home.
 Hameward, homeward.
 Handkerchiefs, handkerchiefs.
 Han'l't, handled.
 Han's, hands.
 Hansel, the first money on any particular occasion; a gift for a particular season.
 Han'som', to wear.
 Hasna, has not.
 Haud, hold.
 Hauf, half.
 Haul-a', haul everything.
 Haun, hand.
 Haun-shake, handshake.
 Haverin', talking nonsense.
 Havering, talking nonsense.
 Havers, nonsense.
 Haw, to the left; go to the left.
 Hayseed, simple farmer.
 Heich, high.
 Held, head.
 Heigh-ho, a sigh of weariness.
 He'll, he will.
 Helpit, helped.
 Het, hot.
 Hich, high.
 Hie, high.
 Hielan, Highland.
 Hike, go away.
 Himsel, himself.
 Hirples, walks as if crippled.
 Hirplin', walking as if crippled.
 Hoast, cough.
 Hogmanay, the day before New Year.
 Homesteader, one who lives on a homestead, in Canada.
 Hooch, an exclamation of admiration. (The "ch" as in loch.)
 Hoose, house.
 Hotch potch, a mixture
 House, hoose.
 Howkin', digging.
 Hunker, hinder; oppose.
 Hurdies, hips.
 Hurl, drive; ride.
 Ilk or ilka, each.
 Immigrative, pertaining to immigration.
 In't, in it.
 Intult, in it.

- Isna, is not.
 Ither's, other's.
- Jing, by,—a mild oath.
 Jingo ring, a game of dancing
 around in a circle holding
 hands.
- Joe, Joseph Chamberlain.
 Joubert, a Boer general.
- Kail, brose, soup.
 Kail, a sort of cabbage.
 Kahki-clad, dressed in soldier's
 uniform.
- Kail yaird, garden.
 Keek, peep.
 Keeks, peeps.
 Keelles, residents of Glasgow.
 Keely, resident of Glasgow.
 Keepit, kept.
 Ken, know.
 Kenna, know not.
 Kenn'd, known.
 Kent, knew.
 Kickit, kicked.
 Kimmer, a married woman;
 a gossip.
 Knavie, knave.
 Knowe, a knoll.
 Kultur, German for culture.
 Kye, cows.
- Laddie, little boy.
 Lan,' land.
 Lang, long.
 Lang's, long as.
 Lassac, young wife.
 Lang syne, long ago.
 Lauchin', laughing.
 Lave, the rest.
 Leave't, leave it.
 Leggit, legged.
 Len', lend.
 Leuk, look; appearance.
 Licht, light.
 Lichtnin', lightning.
 Likin', to feel like.
 Linty, linnet.
 Llievir', living.
- Lithgow's bower, Linlithgow.
 castle.
 "Lizzies," Ford automobiles.
 Lo'e, love.
 Loup, leap.
 Lug, ear.
- Mae, more.
 Mairrit, married
 Maist, most.
 Maistly, mostly.
 Mak, make
 Mang, among.
 Mas, mothers.
 Mask, make tea.
 Maskin-pat, a tea-pot.
 Maun, must.
 Maunna, must not.
 "Maw," mother.
 Maybe, perhaps.
 Micht, might.
 Midden, dunghill.
 Min', mind.
 Miss C.'s, Miss Canada's.
 Mista'en, mistaken.
 Mither, mother.
 Mitherless, motherless.
 Monie, many.
 More-o-'em, more of them.
 Morn's, morning is.
 Mournfu' mournful.
 M.P.'s, Members of Parliament.
 Muckle, much; great; big.
 Murphy, potato.
 Mysel', myself.
- Na', not; no.
 Nae, no.
 Naebody, nobody.
 Naething, nothing.
 Needna, need not.
 Neep, turnip.
 Nemeses, retributive justice per-
 sonified.
 Nicht, night.
 Nick (auld), the devil.
 Nickie-ben, the devil in hell.
 Nighty, nightgown.
 No', not.

- Nocht, *nothing*.
- O', *of*.
- O' a', *of all*.
- Ony, *any*.
- Onything, *anything*.
- Oom Paul, *Uncle Paul; Paul Kruger, leader of the Boers; the Apostle Paul*.
- O't, *of it*.
- Ower, *over*.
- Owre, *over*.
- P.T. bed, *the dandelion; "P. the bed"*.
- Pa Pete, *St. Peter*.
- Pac'd, *experienced; measured*.
- Painch, *paunch; stomach*.
- Pairts, *parts; duties*.
- Pallies, *pals; comrades*.
- Parritch, *porridge*.
- Peevy, *logger's implement; peevishly*.
- Peg's, *Winnipeg's*.
- Pete (Auld), *St. Peter*.
- Pinkies, *little fingers*.
- Pirns, *bobbins*.
- Pleugh, *plough*.
- Plewing, *plowing*.
- Plicht, *plight*.
- Portage Avenue, *avenue in Winnipeg*.
- Pow, *the head; poll*.
- Praties, *potatoes*.
- Free, *to taste*.
- Preen, *pin*.
- Prove't, *prove it*.
- "Puddin' Sam," *nickname given to the author by his sister*.
- Puir, *poor*.
- Pussy willows, *flowers of the willow*.
- Pyrography, *writing on wood with red hot poker*.
- Quat, *quit; quitted*.
- Quod, *prison; asylum*.
- Rakit, *raked*.
- Rape, *rope*.
- Raw, *a row*.
- Red, *put in order*.
- Reek, *smoke*.
- Remead, *remedy*.
- Richt, *right*.
- Rin, *run*.
- Robin, *Robert*.
- Roun', *round*.
- Rounders, *Scotch baseball*.
- 'Roun', *around*.
- Sae, *so*.
- Saf'en, *soften*.
- Soft, *soft*.
- Sair, *sore*.
- Sairly, *sorely*.
- Saith, *say*.
- Sang, *song*.
- Sark, *shirt*.
- Saskatoon, *a city in Saskatchewan; name of a berry, the saskatoon*.
- Saugh, *willow*.
- Schuil, *school*.
- Schuilmaister, *schoolmaster*.
- Scrappin', *contesting*.
- Scrappy, *pugnacious*.
- Screed, *a writing quite informal*.
- Screeched, *screeched*.
- Scule, *school*.
- Selah, *change in measure or subject*.
- Sen', *send*.
- Sen't, *send it*.
- Shaws, *potato tops*.
- Shinty, *ground hockey*.
- Shoon, *shoes*.
- Shouter, *shoulder*.
- Shoutered, *shouldered*.
- Sic, *such*.
- Sicht, *sight*.
- Simmer, *summer*.
- Skeigh, *skittish; high-mettled*.
- Skelp, *slap; a slap*.
- Skirl, *shriek*.
- Skirlin', *shrieking*.
- Slipt, *slipped*.
- Slypet, *slipped*.

- Sma', *small*.
 Snaw, *snow*.
 Sneeshin, *snuff*.
 Snift, *sniff of it*.
 Snowba', *snowball*.
 Snow-gaun, *snowfall*.
 Solatium, *solace*.
 Sough, *sigh; a heavy sigh*.
 Speel, *climb*.
 Spier, *to ask; to inquire*.
 Spierin', *inquiring*.
 Spout, *talk informally*.
 Sprachled, *clambered*.
 Squat, *cowering; emigrate and settle down*.
 Stan', *stand*.
 Stanes, *stones*.
 Staps, *steps*.
 Staun, *stand*.
 Steeks, *stitches*.
 'Sthe, *is the*.
 Stick, *a printer's composing stick*.
 'Sto, *is to*.
 Stoppit, *stopped*.
 Strae, *straw*.
 Strammed, *beaten*.
 Straught, *straight*.
 Stroan, *spout; piss*.
 Stuil, *stool*.
 Sucker, *cunning person*.
 Sumphy, *stupid fellow*.
 Sune, *soon*.
 Swats, *new ale*.
 Swither, *shock; hesitation in choice*.
 Syne, *since; then; ago; auld lang syne—the dear old time*.
 Taen, *taken*.
 Tak, *take*.
 Tam, *Tom*.
 Taskin', *oppressing*.
 Tattles, *potatoes*.
 Tattie-howkin', *potato-digging*.
 Tauld, *told*.
 Tautties, *potatoes*.
 Taws, *teacher's strap*.
 Tear't, *tear it*.
 Tent, *to take heed; mark*.
 Thae, *these*.
 Thegither, *together*.
 Themselfs, *themselves*.
 Thievin', *thieving*.
 Thingummy, *what you may call him*.
 Thistley, *pertaining to thistle*.
 Thocht, *thought*.
 Thole, *suffer; endure*.
 Thrang, *busy*.
 Thrapples, *throats*.
 Thraw, *contradict*.
 Thrawn, *twisted, worried*.
 Thristle, *thistle*.
 Ticht'nin', *tightening*.
 "Tin Lizzles," *Ford automobiles*.
 Tocher, *marriage portion*.
 Toom, *empty*.
 Toorled, *with toory, that is the top of a Scotch bonnet*.
 Toun, *a hamlet*.
 Trachles, *marriageables*.
 Treadin', *treading*.
 Treitschke, *German writer on war*.
 Treitschkenosis (*see above*), *trichinosis, a disease in swine*.
 Truidge, *trudge*.
 Tum'le, *tumble*.
 Turkeys, *knapsacks of threshermen*.
 Tussle, *battle*.
 Twas, *twos*.
 Twa-three, *two or three*.
 'Twerena, *it were not*.
 Uncle Paul, *Paul Kruger, Boer leader*.
 Unco, *very; great; extreme*.
 Uncle Samuel, *United States of America*.
 Vera, *very*.
 Wa', *wall*.
 Wad, *would; to wed*.
 Waddin, *wedding*.
 Wadna, *would not*.
 Wae, *sorrowful*.

Waefu' woful, woeful.	Whisht, peace; silence.
Waes me, woe's me, woe is me.	White-powed, white-headed.
Wame, the belly.	Whoa-back-gee, stop, turn to the
Wark, work.	right, and go back.
World, world.	Whup, whip.
Worldly, worldly.	Whyles, sometimes.
Warlock, wizard.	Wi', with.
Warst, worst.	Winna, will not.
Wasna, was not.	Winnipeg Falcons, hockey team
Was't, was it.	that toured Europe.
Wastit, wasted.	"Wipers," Ypres.
Wat, wet; wot; know.	Wi't, with it.
Wauchle, wriggle.	Wonderfu' wonderful.
Waukin', awake.	Wrang, wrong.
Waur, worse.	
Weans, children.	Yaird, garden.
Wecht, weight.	Years't, years it.
Wee, little.	Yerd, yard.
Weel, well.	Yerk, to jerk; jerk; to lash.
Weet, wet.	Yestreen, yesternight.
Weeting, wetting.	Yett, gate.
Werena, were not.	Yetts, gates.
Wha, who.	Yirth, earth.
Whare, where.	Yon, that.
Whatiffer, whatever.	Yowe, ewe.
Whaur, where.	Yowes, ewes.
Wheep, make to fly.	
Whiff o' reek, cloud of smoke.	Zep, zeppelin.
Whiles, sometimes.	Zeps, zeppelins.

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